

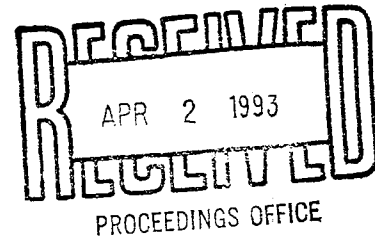
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY STUDIES AT MARYLAND

Leitenberg U2311
Marle

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Dr. Frances Zwanzig

The Editors
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Dear Dr Zwanzig

The opening paragraph of "Pathology of inhalational anthrax in 42 cases from the Sverdlovsk outbreak of 1979" (PNAS, 90, March 1993, pp. 2291-94) refers to a Soviet publication on May 1980. The article then goes on to state: "Little further information has been published."

This is most decidedly not the case, although none of the other recent publications--all in 1990, 1991, and 1992--contained the sort of pathological and histological evidence which is presented in the PNAS article. Between March 1990 and November-December 1991, about one-dozen articles of investigative journalism appeared in the Soviet press regarding the events surrounding the anthrax outbreak in Sverdlovsk, and the Soviet government's response to it. All of these articles were available to Dr. Matthew Meselson almost as soon as they appeared in print in the USSR. The final articles in this series presented interviews with very senior KGB and military officials who made explicit that:

- (a) The outbreak had been one of inhalation anthrax;
- (b) that it originated with an airborne release of anthrax from the military biological warfare research and development institute in Sverdlovsk; and
- (c) that Soviet protestations to the contrary between 1979 and 1988--including the May 1980 article referred to attributing the anthrax to infected meat--were part of a concerted disinformation campaign by Soviet authorities.

These disclosures were summarized in a paper published here in Washington in Arms Control Today in April 1992 ("Anthrax in Sverdlovsk: New Pieces to the Puzzle,") a copy of which is attached below. They were described in greater detail in another paper in Arms Control 12:2, September 1991, pp. 161-190 ("A Return to Sverdlovsk: Allegations of Soviet Activities Related to Biological Weapons"). Therefore, not only is it not true that "Little further information has been published," but, peculiarly, not one of these other publications is referenced in the PNAS article, which is decidedly contrary to scientific tradition and scholarly practice.

The revelations in the articles published in the USSR were accepted as proof of the cause of the anthrax outbreak in Sverdlovsk by virtually every member of the arms control community in the United States, as well as internationally. Although the histological and pathological evidence presented in the PNAS paper is of interest, the earlier publications were unquestionably instrumental in identifying the cause and origin of the outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk in 1979.

Sincerely yours,

Milton Leitenberg

Milton Leitenberg

(Senior McArthur Scholar)