

Date: Mon, 22 Apr 2002 10:52:39 -0400 (EDT)
From: Matthew S. Meselson <msm@wjh.harvard.edu>
To: Barbara RING <ring@fas.harvard.edu>
Subject: BEN GARRETYT--Anthrax Investigation Update & Other News (fwd)

Matthew Meselson
Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
Harvard University
7 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
email: <msm@wjh.harvard.edu>
telephone: (617) 495-2264
telefax: (617) 496-2444

----- Forwarded message -----
Date: Sat, 20 Apr 2002 12:35:24 -0400
From: Dier4@aol.com
To: msm@wjh.harvard.edu
Subject: Anthrax Investigation Update & Other News

Dear Matt,

I hope life goes well for you and Jeanne. I was so delighted to join you for breakfast last month. It was a pleasant change of pace from my Olympics deployment.

The anthrax investigation continues, of course. My Science Staff of 4 microbiologists remain involved, even if our involvement is, at times, tangential rather than direct. We are preparing to launch an exciting phase in which we will collect samples from biosafety cabinets, filters, and post office boxes. We have learned much about sampling techniques - and much of what we've learned either contradicts prevailing wisdom or fills in gaps in our knowledge. My team is anxious for the day when we'll be allowed to present our findings. One of my staff has prepared a superb briefing on results of the sampling in Florida, NY, and through the mail centers. The results are provocative. For now, the results are briefed internally only, in an effort to train our evidence teams on how to do a better job. I think you'd find the briefing informative, and I've asked for permission to have you briefed. Please advise me when business brings you to DC again.

Let me mention two other matters.

1 - I was contacted by Dr. Bob Howard, who gives his association as Harvard School of Medicine and the JFK Center for Government Affairs (any mistakes in organizational names are mine, not his). He and Dr. Miles Shore, also of the med school, and Deb Shapiro of JFK, are putting together a weeklong symposium on Bioterrorism. The date is the week of November 18. Howard, who is retired from both the US Navy and the CDC, asked me to be on the Advisory Board so that I might help screen papers for the symposium. After consulting with my team and determining their interest in doing the screening (they were excited by the prospect, actually), I agreed. I failed to ask how they had gotten my name and number, and I am sure they did not get them from you - Bob Howard seemed to be calling blind, based on a call to the FBI switchboard. I'd be the POC for such blind calls! But I wonder if this symposium is known to you and, if so, whether you could offer an opinion. Thanks.

2 - The April 4th issue of Chemical & Engineering News carried an interview by Lois Ember of Barbara Hatch Rosenberg. Rosenberg is known to me, of course, but not well. The interview lacked balance, although Rosenberg's criticisms of the FBI often had substance (at least, they did to me, as an insider). Two issues she raised deserve a response. For one, she derided the FBI agents who interviewed her as unknowledgeable. For another, she advanced a conspiracy theory alleging deliberate failure by the FBI to arrest the Bad Guy if he proves to be someone from the Government's anthrax programs.

On the first issue, Rosenberg displayed a lack of understanding of how interviewers are trained. The tactic is one of acting as though one is unknowledgeable. Suspects will reveal all sorts of useful information when an interviewer allows them to brag about what they did and how they did it. On the other hand, interviewer responses like "I know all about that" are off-putting and work against the interview process - which is, after all, intended to

elicit information from the subject, not to show how smart we are as investigators. I know, though, that a common feedback from subjects interviewed on the anthrax investigation (I read such comments off the internet) is that the investigators strike them as unknowledgeable. Fair enough. The investigators are probably unknowledgeable regarding microbiology. But they are skilled as investigators - or so I hope!

The second issue - a Conspiracy Theory - shows a serious miscalculation by Rosenberg. The FBI is a wounded agency. We stand guilty of losing 100+ computers, many with classified information; misplacing 414 guns; and allowing a spy - Bob Hansen - to operate in our midst for 20+ years. Other items that have surfaced in Congressional testimony deal with a pattern of systematic abuses of government travel and government vehicles by our Senior Level Executives, who managed to avoid any punishment, while junior staff were fired for minor infractions, such as forgetting their employee badges once too often. We have been raked over the coals by Congress for our poor performance on the anthrax investigation - I know this personally, because I was on the front row for Senator Feinstein's comments on November 6th. Anyone who unmasks the unknown subject responsible for the Fall 2001 anthrax-laced letters will get a medal. The Bureau needs a hero or two. The prospect we would participate in a coverup of any sins committed by the Intelligence Community - if any were - is incomprehensible to me as an insider. That Ember would allow Rosenberg's comments to go unchallenged shows the Bureau's position in this matter is poorly understood. Oh well. If you encounter any otherwise reasonable folks who give credence to Rosenberg's Conspiracy Theory, perhaps you could get them to come to their senses!

Best regards
Ben