

D4.4.1



Matthew Meselson <msmeselson@gmail.com>

Re: Silica and yellow rain

1 message

Matthew Meselson <msm@wjh.harvard.edu>

Sat, Mar 31, 2007 at 4:24 PM

To: Dier4@aol.com, Julian Robinson <jppr@hspxsq.u-net.com>

*Dear Ben,

Many thanks for sending your enlightening piece on dusty agent.

It reminded me of a WWII Spandau laboratory notebook describing experiments on naked people deliberately exposed in chambers at Spandau to dusty T and HT. In translation from the German, one of the observations that impressed me as I read it was "...their skin fell off..." A photocopy of the notebook and its English translation was at Natick last I saw it, around 1990.

At the end of this email is the English translation of the descriptor of the Spandau notebook.

The name Stuhldreer undoubtedly refers to the Dr. Stuhldreer mentioned on the two web sites Google finds under that name:

<http://forum.alliance-francophone.net/index.php?act=Print&client=html&f=56&t=34259>

<http://diberville.blogspot.com/search/label/F%C3%BChrerdammerung>

*I do not know if G. Kdos is a person's name. Perhaps you do.

*As an attachment, I enclose my notes on a puzzling matter possibly involving Nazi CW scientists being kept secretly in the US with the assistance of a mysterious person named Vernon Otto Erk, an American medical researcher who co-authored a 1957 paper cited at:

*<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1749-6632.1957.tb54598.x>

*According to the paper, Erk was then at *the Metropolitan Medical Center Research Unit, New York Medical College, Bird S. Coler Hospital, New York, N. Y.

*The "scientific advertisements mentioned near the end of my memo as having been mis-addressed to Frank (not Vernon) Erk may have been from the Grass Foundation, a foundation dedicated to research in neurobiology.

*From the Spandau notebook: *

Army Gas Defense Labs

Spandau

Lab VI a L

Berlin-Spandau, Citadel

* 42/44 G. Kdos, VI a h.*

* G. Kdos October 1944.*

* Distribution (not reproduced) 12 copies.*

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1946 Translation by CDR5

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Stuhldreer

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VI a L Report 63/41

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*VI a L Report 21/42 *

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Trials on naked showered [volunteers]

VI a L Report 25/44 "Trials on the Use of T and HT in the form of Dust!"

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Translated C.L. Wheeler

28.5.46

Dier4@aol.com wrote:

Dear Matt,

I am not a reader of the International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence. I look forward to reading the articles you have provided.

I look forward, too, to reading the draft of the chapter you and Julian have prepared on Attribution.

I submitted a comment to Dick Price's ASA Newsletter in response to the recent article by Jan Medema on "Dusty Agent". My comment deals with the earliest mention I have encountered on this topic. That mention occurs in a late 1918 manual published by the US Allied Expeditionary Forces, HQ, Paris. It notes the use by the Germans of a munition in which phosgene was sorbed into/onto pumice. The manual notes that this tactic was successful in achieving a more persistent coverage with phosgene that would have been seen for phosgene alone. There are similar comments in an article prepared shortly thereafter by Amos Fries and published in some journal, then reprinted as study materials for the students at the Army's Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College.

On further study, I found that these results inspired Heinrich Wieland, then part of Fritz Haber's staff at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry, Berlin-Dahlem, to develop pesticide formulations using a sorbent material impregnated with otherwise highly volatile toxic chemicals. Wieland's work continued after the Armistice, as Haber hit upon the scheme of using "pesticide research" as a means of concealing Germany's continuing development of chemical weapons. In 1919, Wieland's associate Ferdinand Flury patented the first of several formulations of hydrogen cyanide and esters of cyanoformic acid sorbed onto diatomaceous earths. Testing showed that the best formulation was methyl cyanoformate (in German: "Zyankohlensaure-methylester"). The German word inspired Flury's choice of a brand name for these formulations: "Zyklon", which was registered on 20 October 1920. Zyklon proved highly effective as a disinfectant as well as a pesticide for treating silos, storage bins, and cargo holds. Wieland, who began this work, departed Haber's institute in 1921. He appears to have abandoned this line of research, and there are no publications associated with him thereafter dealing with pesticides or disinfectants. He became famed for his research into bile acids, receiving the 1927 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology for this work. He never wrote of his discovery of the formulation for Zyklon nor of his work with Haber, although the records clearly show his involvement in the German CW program. His biographers have also ignored this chapter in Wieland's professional career. But it seems clear that the World War I experience with phosgene-on-pumice inspired cyanide-on-diatomaceous earth that we all know from its role in the concentration camps. I

don't know whether anyone has ever commented on this tie, however, in any discussions about the supposed novelty of "dusty agents".

Regards
BEN

See what's free at AOL.com <<http://www.aol.com?ncid=AOLAOF00020000000503>>.

 **MandersErk.doc**
46K

Erk

Notes regarding Vernon Otto Erk

Approximately five years ago, I received a number of telephone calls from Mr. Karl Manders of Westfield, Indiana. All I can find of this now, in February 1997, is a single sheet of notes on lined paper.

The notes may refer to more than one telephone conversation with Manders. Although the notes make no mention of it, the conversations included the speculation of Manders that Erk had been arranging safe houses for German CBW experts brought to the United States after WWII.

The following indented items are based on my old sheet of notes and on memory.

--Manders telephone numbers are (317) 758-5668 (h) and (317) 923-3285 (o).

--Manders identified himself as a private investigator associated with Century Investigation Bureau and Century Insurance.

--Manders had been associated with Boston University in 1969-70. "BU '69-'70 SDS" appears in my notes.

--The apparent reason for Manders' call was to ask if I could assist him to locate a person named Vernon Otto Erk.

--Erk may have been somehow involved with chemical and/or biological weapons.

--Manders was led to me by the Nevin case or a Nevin family member, which he had read about in the book "Clouds of Secrecy" by Leonard Cole.

--Manders was attempting to locate Erk on behalf of a female private investigator in California who had engaged his firm. The private investigator herself had been engaged to find Erk by a California law firm but seemed to know little about the case.

--Erk had acted as renter of apartments and houses in certain parts of the country, I believe in the late 1940s and 1950s.

--One group of houses was in Danville, CA, near Oakland. These were rented to or occupied by:

- Matthew and Nohemy Harrington
- Walter Collins
- Robert S. and Mildred Marten
- Dorothy J. Harris
- Charles W. Dickenson

--The rent payments were deposited to an account overseen by Orlando J. Bowman, a California attorney who died in 1973. It may have been a trust account, not under Bowman's name.

--Erk obtained the MD degree from University of Indiana Medical School; also studied chemical engineering at Purdue; "Mass Memorial Hospital" in '45-46; Marine Corps in Mobile AL; back to IU to take courses in elementary science; then went to Rutgers.

--"Robert Johnson ca 69" appears in my notes. This was an alias for Vernon Otto Erk.

--Margaret Lee Smith Erk is the former wife of Erk and is a highly competent lawyer who is or was associated with the office of the Indiana Attorney General. She may have attended Yale.

--I recall thinking that the client might have been acting on behalf of Margaret Lee Smith Erk, seeking to recover the rental monies.

--My notes refer to a "big fee", for Mander or his company if he succeeded in finding Erk.

--A person named Robert W. Knight was involved in some ominous way, having threatened Manders with serious unspecified harm if he should continue his investigations. This happened in an office where Margaret Lee Smith Erk, Knight and Manders were meeting.

--Robert W. Knight attended BU Business Administration in '51 and is now in Indiana.

--Erk was arrested in Indianapolis in 1983 but refused to give his name to the arresting officer.

--Erk was a name familiar to me because I knew of a Professor Frank Erk, a biologist at the State University of New York at Stonybrook. I asked Dr. Monica Riley, a former post-doctoral fellow in my laboratory who had subsequently joined the faculty at the State University of New York at Stonybrook to ask Frank Erk if he knew of a Vernon Otto Erk. He did not, but has received advertisements from a scientific supply company addressed to Vernon Otto Erk. In addition, Frank Erk told Monica that another Stonybrook biology professor, Robert Merriam, had rented a house from a Vernon Erk. Monica then contacted Merriam, who said that he had rented a house from Vernon Erk in 1959-60, when he was at Rutgers but that he had never met Vernon Erk.

At about 1:00 PM on Sunday 19 January 1997, I telephoned the above

office and home telephone numbers for Manders. The old office number is not in use. No one answered the home number. I then telephoned area (317) telephone information for Karl Manders and was told that the customer had requested that the number not be given out. After about 15 minutes, I telephoned the old home number again. A child answered and asked who was calling. I identified myself, whereupon a woman came to the phone. She confirmed that I had reached the residence of Karl Manders, saying that Karl was out, attending his fathers' birthday celebration.

I also called area (317) telephone information for the number of Century Insurance and Century Investigation Bureau. No such were listed. Instead there is a Sentry Insurance Company in Carmel (844-7647), in Indianapolis (780-1001) and in Fisher (842-5232). Perhaps I had written "Century" when Manders said "Sentry".

At about 9:30 PM Monday evening January 20 1997, I telephoned Manders at his home number and was told by "Kathy" that he was at the grocery store and would return in about an hour. At 10:30 I called again and spoke to Manders until 11:00. As I recalled from earlier conversations, he has a pleasant and relaxed manner and seemed pleased to talk to me again. I believe he said that he is 44 years old. The following are taken from my notes on the conversation:

--Manders eventually did locate Vernon Otto Erk. He was living in and apparently owned a motel in Maryland, near Aberdeen.

--Erk has a son, listed in some data base. This led to the father.

--Erk was divorced from his wife, Margaret Lee Smith Erk, in 1957. She spells her first name with two t's.

--She had been a top lawyer in the office of the Indiana Attorney General. Manders' father had known her. His father is a neurosurgeon and also had been a county coroner.

--She had expressed to Manders strong condemnation of radiological experiments done by USG agencies on humans in the 1940s and 1950s, which were widely publicized in the media in 1994.

--She had a good deal of money in a California bank. Owned property in Switzerland, Los Angeles and lives in Indianapolis.

--Robert W. Knight appeared to be her "watcher".

--Manders' father knew Knight from Army intelligence.

--An alias of Erk is Robert Johnson.

--Manders old company was originally hired to find Erk by an investigator in California who was working for a law firm in California. Manders feels that the law firm did not really want Erk found but rather wanted him declared missing, so as to free the considerable amount of money that had accumulated from rents in the account of Orlando Bowman.

--When Manders found Erk, the California law firm asked for a report stating that he had not found Erk. Thereupon, Manders terminated the assignment.

--Manders has his own company now: "Continental Enterprises".

--Manders' suspects that Erk was caring for German CW experts brought to the US after WWII. This fits the facts he knows: Erk is fluent in German language; Erk resides or rents houses and apartments located near CW facilities: Oakland, Alabama, Aberdeen, Newport (*is this correct?*); Erk lives secretive and eccentric life; Erk has medical degree and training in chemical engineering.

--Erk was once stopped by a police officer in Richmond, Indiana and refused to give his name. He was jailed. He then sued on principle, being listed in court records as John Doe. Manders found the arresting officer and discovered that the file on the case and the mug shots were missing.

--The widow of Orlando Bowman remembered Margaret Lee Smith Erk.

--Manders found and interviewed the widow of a 2nd cousin of Vernon Erk.

--Although Erk is a physician, his medical file is sealed. A friend of Manders obtained it, noting endorsements to practice in various other states, thereby tracking his movements.

--Erk obtained his MD degree in 1944-45. Then went to Army, then to Lafayette, near Newport Indiana. At that time he registered at Purdue in basic science. Manders thinks this could have been a cover.

--Manders does undercover work for the fashion industry in California.

--Manders telephoned me at 11:50 on Tuesday morning 21 January at Harvard. I had given him the number. He would fax material about the radiation tests, which came time-dated Jan 21 04:33 PM, no

return fax number, altogether 14 pages but no mention of Margaret Lee Smith.

--Manders firm is Continental Enterprises, 141 First Street, SW, Suite 16, Carmel IN 46032. Telephone (317) 575-8793, fax (317) 581-1404.

--Manders telephoned me at Harvard at 4:45 on Wednesday afternoon 29 January

--Mike Kingston had telephoned him. Regarding Schrader and Karl Wimmer?

--Before the radiation stories appeared in the media, Margaret told Manders that she and Erk had been involved.

--Margaret had harsh words for the government.

--She still lives in central Indiana.

--Margaret and Vernon Erk were divorced in 1957. Manders had spoken with the widow of Margaret's divorce lawyer.

--According to a friend of Manders' father, Robert W. Knight is involved in intelligence work, as is the friend.

--Upon reviewing his files and recollections, Manders continues to suspect that Vernon Otto Erk was protecting German CBW experts in the US and intends to keep looking into the matter.

On Thursday or Friday evening, 30-31 January, I telephoned Frank Erk at his home in Stonybrook (516) 751-0489. He confirmed having received scientific advertisements from Grasse addressed to Vernon Erk. Frank comes from Indiana and his family traces to NW Germany, near Osnebruchen, near Hanover. When Frank hired Bob Merriam to come to Stonybrook, Merriam said there was just one negative factor: the name Erk. Merriam had an unpleasant experience with a Vernon Erk in Rutgers, where he rented a house from Erk without ever meeting him. Merriam now lives at 154 Monroe Circle, Durham NC 27707. Telephone information gives his number as (919) 489-4359. Charles Staley was another friend.

I telephoned the home of Professor Robert Merriam in Durham, NC at about 10:30 AM Monday February 3 and was referred to his office at the NC Nature Conservancy (919) 403-8558, which I then called. Merriam did not remember the name of Vernon Otto Erk. He did recall a dispute with an anonymous landlord in 1958-59 when Merriam was at Columbia University and lived in Teaneck, NJ. Merriam had rented a house there, perhaps through an agent. Although Merriam had made substantial improvements, at the end of his rental the landlord failed to return the deposit. Rent payments had been made to a post office box, the landlord remaining anonymous. Merriam hired an attorney to locate the landlord and recover the deposit, but to no avail. The house had two stories and was located on a corner on River Road, where there were mulberry trees. The house was across the street from a park beyond which was the Hackensack River. There was a garage facing on the cross street.

According to an old notebook:

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Spandau
Lab VI a L
Berlin-Spandau, Citadel

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G. Kdos October 1944.

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