

National Defense Against Germ Warfare

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

The following was released by LaRouche's campaign committee for the 2004 Democratic Presidential nomination.

October 28, 2001

War costs a lot of money, and more; but, losing a war to an attacking adversary costs infinitely more. That is the lesson to be learned from the wave of anthrax attacks launched from inside the U.S.A. The question posed by these attacks is, "What is coming next?"

The qualifications of the authors of these attacks are now not only fairly well known; even much of the U.S. mass media is beginning to come close to the truth on some important features of these attacks. The immediate, urgent problem is that of developing and deploying a well-coordinated homeland defense on the biological warfare front. This must be deployed not only against the anthrax attacks presently reported, but against whatever might be the weapon and strategy used by the enemy next.

This means, that we must now quickly end all confusion and cross-purposes among those agencies which must function effectively as a coordinated team of various governmental and private agencies. To that end, it is important that we develop a consensus on the approach to be taken, and the nature of the actions to be taken, whatever they may cost, in making those actions effective. On this particular subject, it is important that I intervene to contribute personally, publicly, to stress the following points.

National Defense As Sanitation

The most important principles of national defense against bacteriological and related forms of warfare, were consolidated as knowledge in the experience of World War II and the war in Korea. Those lessons were featured in the adoption and implementation of the Hill-Burton legislation adopted

shortly after the close of World War II.

From the related experience our nation, and others, have accumulated over the centuries, we must not limit the idea of defense against germ warfare and related attacks, to the role of medical practice. We must situate the role of the medical profession, both in care for the sick and in other ways, as an essential, subsumed feature of public sanitation.

I explain this extremely important distinction to be made at this point of our national defense requirements. It is to the degree that we have taken down much of the national-defense protection provided by public and related measures of sanitation, during the recent three decades, that our nation's vulnerabilities to the presently ongoing germ-warfare attacks were created as the opportunities they presently represent to the advantage of our enemies.

National biological defense means, chiefly, those measures of sanitation which are essential to improving and defending the life-expectancies and well-being of the population as a whole. This includes those measures and institutionalized practice which modern society has come to consider public sanitation. This includes not only safe water, but also improved supplies of energy, per capita and per square kilometer, this at declining relative costs to communities, industries, and the general public. It includes improved public transportation.

It also includes the practice of the medical professions generally. The pivotal feature of the medical profession's role, is the general hospital, provided as a public institution which is not only a teaching institution, but which serves those sections of the population which are relatively indigent, and are therefore the most likely radiators of infectious diseases. The public teaching hospital of this type, which is also integrated with the teaching and research functions of a university, is among the most valuable such facilities.

The feature of medical practice to be emphasized in deal-

ing with the actuality and threats of biological warfare, as now, is the ability of the medical profession to respond effectively by producing, rapidly, appropriate forms of non-standard treatment for diseases of a non-standard quality. In such circumstances, we must deal not merely with the apparent “ingenuity” of infectious organisms, but with an enemy, like H.G. Wells’ fictional “Dr. Moreau,” whose satanic impulses are employed to make infectious agents more deadly than such diseases could become by so-called natural means.

However, without lessening emphasis on the importance of medical counter-intelligence practice, it is public sanitation which remains the first line of defense of the population against both normal epidemic disease, and also biological warfare attacks. We require a coordinated, “crash program” sort of attack on both fronts, combined.

This means that we must move quickly, not only to restore the indispensable Washington, D.C. General Hospital, but to restore those medical and infrastructural defenses which were taken down, piece by piece, during the approximate quarter-century since the enactment of the original HMO legislation. If we do not do that, whatever might happen to you and your family as a result of biological warfare attacks should be considered now as virtually “a done deal.”

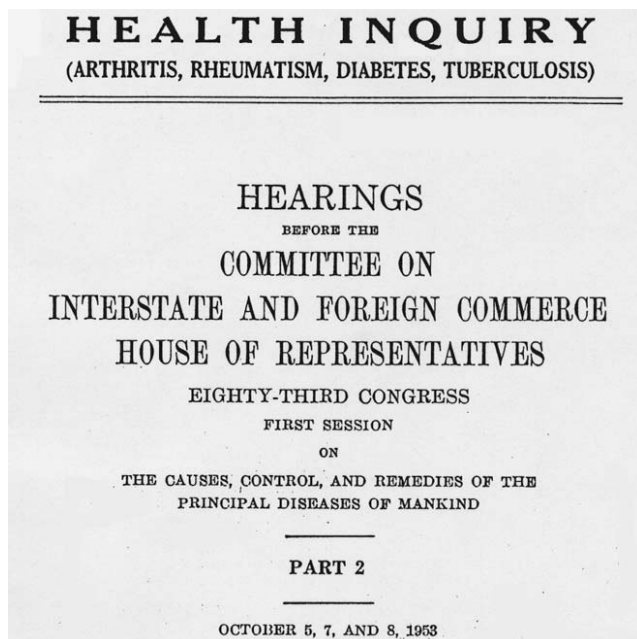
The Usual Snafu

Homeland defense has been launched with the usual snafu. It came to the surface as a suddenly improvised new agency, without adequate measures to integrate the effort with the work of other, pre-existing agencies operating in the same general area of responsibility. So far, even in dealing with the anthrax problems in the Washington, D.C. general area, citizens are literally being killed by “red tape.”

Fortunately, senior figures with inside knowledge of former national “crash programs,” such as the Manhattan Project and NASA, are invaluable advisors on such topics as “Don’t make the mistakes we made” issues, especially in coordination among military specialists, scientists, and the general bureaucratic, legislative, and lobbying influences which are most prone to ruin the implementation of what had been excellent missions. Science, economics-driven policy-making for application of science, and military precision of deployment must be integrated into a single mission-orientation, and this must be backed with a general “whatever it takes directive” from the President himself.

There is now no reason to doubt, that there is some functional connection between what happened on Sept. 11th and the anthrax attacks. Exactly what that connection might be, we either do not know, or those who know are not telling us. Know, or not, the connection exists, and it is presently a functionally interconnected operation.

So far, the character of the attacks has been psychological warfare, primarily. The thousands of deaths in New York and Washington of Sept. 11, are mass-effects for the families and friends of those who died, but from the standpoint of the enemy who planned and perpetrated those attacks, the intent



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was psychological warfare. So, it has been, so far, with the germ-warfare attacks. However, we also know, that, although the effects of the attacks express the intention to terrify the U.S. population, the enemy behind these attacks intends to break the will of the U.S. population; that enemy is prepared “to go for broke,” just as in a coup d’état in which plotters, if defeated and caught, are as good as dead. There is no assurance that the plotters will limit themselves to the kind of limited-mission terror-attacks experienced so far.

We must therefore prepare for the worst, but aim for the best. That must be the mission of the overall warfare, and also the specific mission of the biological elements of homeland defense.

We must also include the danger of correlated attacks of a somewhat different form. Deadly riots, with disruptive political effects, such as those which had been planned to occur in the Washington, D.C. area for late September, are to be expected from the kind of command-structure which implicitly deployed the attacks experienced thus far. Destruction of crucial economic elements of infrastructure, industry, and food supplies, must be expected from a still-unknown adversary who has revealed that character of his capabilities and intentions. This is not a war like World War II, for example; but it has the characteristics of warfare in effects upon the population of both the U.S.A. and any other nation targeted by the same adversary.

Gentlemen: get your act together quickly. Bring the snafu quickly to an end.