

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 04/01/2005

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On March 31, 2005, BRUCE EDWARDS IVINS, PhD, date of birth April 22, 1946, Social Security Account Number 280-44-5449, was interviewed by Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) [redacted] and Inspector [redacted] of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The interview was conducted at IVINS' place of employment, the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) at Fort Detrick, Maryland. IVINS' office telephone number is [redacted]

IVINS is employed as a Research Microbiologist in the Bacteriology Division of USAMRIID and was so employed at the time of the fall 2001 anthrax attacks. IVINS has been interviewed numerous times throughout the course of the AMERITHRAX investigation. The purpose of the interview was to elicit additional details concerning specific topics of heightened relevance to the investigation.

Handwritten notes in a box: 17, 3, 17, 19, 15, 17, 19

Prior to the commencement of the interview on March 31, 2005, IVINS was presented with a Non-Disclosure Agreement which he reviewed and signed. IVINS' signing of the form was witnessed by the interviewing Agents as memorialized on the form. The Non-Disclosure Agreement is filed in the 1A section of the file along with the notes of the interviewing Agents and documents shown to Ivins during the interview.

IVINS' Collection of Environmental Samples at USAMRIID

ADMINISTRATIVE: Ivins was questioned regarding information he previously provided during an interview on April 24-25, 2002, concerning his unilateral decision to collect environmental samples (swabs) from his USAMRIID office work space and other areas in December 2001 and April 2002. The results of this prior interview are memorialized in an FD-302 which is serialized at 279A-WF-222936-302 Serial 1700.

IVINS explained that in December 2001, he shared an office (Room [redacted] Building 1425) with [redacted]

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During this time period, IVINS and [redacted] worked in the [redacted] Division. [redacted] also worked in the [redacted] Division but was [redacted]

The purpose

Investigation on 03/31/2005 at Ft. Detrick, Maryland

File # 279A-WF-222936-^{BEI 53}USAMRIID-1223 Date dictated 04/01/2005

by SSA [redacted]
Inspector [redacted]

[redacted] wpd

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b6 of [] was to assist [] with the increased workload in
b7C that division occasioned by the fall 2001 anthrax attacks.

By way of background, Ivins related that in October 2001, the Daschle letter was initially weighed in Room [] and then processed and photographed in Rooms []. These rooms are part of the Special Pathogens Branch of DSD and are biosafety level two (BSL-2) facilities. All three rooms are located in Building 1425. Following the initial processing of the Daschle letter, IVINS was tasked by [] to assess the concentration of the anthrax powder in the Daschle envelope. To perform a colony count, IVINS took the Daschle letter to Room [] in Suite B3.

IVINS identified two reasons for his decision to swab his office space in December 2001. First, IVINS did not believe that the Daschle letter should have been processed in Room [] and [] because the biosafety level category (i.e., BSL-2) was not adequate to contain aerosolizable anthrax powder. Consequently, he was concerned that some anthrax may have escaped the confines of these two rooms. Second, IVINS advised that [] commented "daily" to him during [] that [] employee lab practices were unsafe. [] complained about this "many times," he said. Based on [] claims, IVINS feared that [] inadvertently may have contaminated the office []. Accordingly, IVINS decided to collect environmental samples from [] desk, chair, telephone and computer. IVINS did not swab his own work area (i.e., desk, chair, computer) or that of [] even though they all shared the same room. IVINS collected approximately 20 individual swabs from [] work area.

b6 When queried as to why he swabbed only []
b7C workspace, IVINS said his decision was predicated on the layer of dust he observed on [] desk and the fact that [] was the only one [] who had been working [] where lab safety procedures were believed to be substandard. IVINS also offered that the air flow of the heating/ventilating/air conditioning (HVAC) system in the room placed his desk and [] desk "upwind" from [] desk so that he did not expect any errant anthrax spores to have settled on his or [] desk.

IVINS advised that his culturing of the environmental samples from [] produced "a few presumptives" - i.e., colonies that visually appeared to be *Bacillus anthracis*.

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Specifically, about one-half of the twenty samples he collected appeared to generate anthrax colonies when cultured. IVINS did not subject these "presumptive" positives to any confirmatory analysis. In response to these presumptive positives, IVINS said he cleaned up [redacted] desk and left it at that. He took no further actions to decontaminate the room. When questioned as to why he took no remedial measures beyond cleaning up [redacted] desk, IVINS advised that he did not consider the level of contamination indicated by his sampling to be significant, stating that he did not find "hundreds or thousands" of spores but only a "few presumptives." IVINS said he did not believe a full decontamination of the room was warranted based on his findings, and he did not perceive himself or his office mates to be in any danger.

IVINS confirmed that he did not tell [redacted] about his swabbing of [redacted] workspace nor did he advise [redacted] of the presumptive positive results. IVINS did tell [redacted] about his findings. He did not suggest to either co-worker that antibiotic prophylaxis might be appropriate. IVINS again reiterated that based on the level of contamination he observed, he did not perceive himself or his coworkers to be at risk.

IVINS confirmed that he undertook the collection of environmental samples from his office space on his own initiative and without any prior authorization from superiors. When queried as to why he did not seek permission to swab or voice his concerns about the possible contamination to USAMRIID's [redacted] [redacted] or others, IVINS predicted that [redacted] would have been dismissive of his concerns and would have told him to "forget about it." IVINS related that [redacted] angry reaction when [redacted] learned of IVINS' environmental sampling confirmed IVINS' suspicions that [redacted] would be opposed to such swabbing. IVINS opined that despite his outward response, [redacted] inwardly seemed "sort of pleased" with IVINS' finding of contamination because it allowed [redacted] to "point a finger" at [redacted] for poor laboratory safety procedures.

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IVINS also re-emphasized that there was a longstanding political rivalry between DSD and the Bacteriology Division. According to IVINS, Bacteriology Division employees felt somewhat ostracized and belittled by DSD researchers who were reportedly loathe to consult Bacteriology employees concerning matters within Bacteriology employees' superior expertise. The path IVINS chose to swab was the path that the Daschle letter took from [redacted] to and through the pass-box in the wall of suite B3. IVINS believed

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any contamination would most likely have occurred along the same path the letter took. IVINS also reported that he had no concerns about [redacted] competency as a [redacted] and his decision to swab [redacted] work area was not influenced by any perception that [redacted] was negligent in [redacted] safety practices.

IVINS was also questioned concerning information he previously provided during an interview on April 24-25, 2002, concerning his unilateral decision to collect environmental samples (swabs) from areas associated with Suite B3 in Building 1425 in April 2002. IVINS advised that he made the decision to unilaterally swab areas associated with Suite B3 when he learned that USAMRIID researcher [redacted] had recently conducted an environmental sampling of the B3 lab which produced several presumptive positives for *Bacillus anthracis*. [redacted] reportedly undertook this sampling effort in response to a suspected spill which occurred during an experiment being conducted by researchers [redacted]. As a precautionary measure, nasal swabs were taken from [redacted]

[redacted] In addition to the possible spill and [redacted] nasal swab, IVINS also recalled that Suite B3 is where he had conducted plating and colony counts on the Daschle letter. Consequently, he suspected that stray spores may have aerosolized during that effort.

IVINS advised that the December 2001 and April 2002 environmental samplings represent the only two times he has ever swabbed in the cold areas of USAMRIID outside of the hot suites. IVINS related that during the early 1990s he performed a lot of swabbing inside the hot suites as part of USAMRIID's routine environmental monitoring program. He conducted this sampling at the direction of his superiors. These samples were collected as a routine safety precaution and, unlike his December 2001 and April 2002 collections, were not performed in response to a specific concern or suspected contamination. IVINS has since been excluded from the task of any such monitoring.

IVINS reported that no isolates related to his December 2001 or April 2002 swabbing initiatives remain in existence. IVINS said he threw them away after obtaining the presumptive positive results.