

Chapter 16

SECRET PROJECT WHITECOAT

Seventh-day Adventist Germ Warfare Concessions

*The guardians of the Adventist Church . . . are content with a morality of form without substance, one in which the arts of disease can be presented as the healing arts, and in which germ warfare can be embraced in pious obedience to divine injunction against death. Rose, pages 179, 180, op sit.,
Martin D. Turner, "Project Whitecoat,"
Spectrum, Summer, 1970.*

Sidney Katz reports on the most secret weapon in the arsenals of both East and West – “the mind poisons,” *Maclean’s* stated in A Report to Canada. “Their purpose is conquest without slaughter, and already some military leaders are calling them ‘humane.’” (*Maclean’s*, April 21, 1962).

“Using human volunteers to test new chemical and biological agents is not without risk,” Katz stated. “The English experiments have resulted in at least one death which was discussed in the house of Commons.” (*ibid.*, Sidney Katz, *Maclean’s*, April 21, 1962).

The American Program

“During the past ten years, in the American program, it is reported that there have been at least three deaths, and some 715 cases of illness and injury of ‘varying intensity,’” Katz stated. “The American volunteers are recruited from the penitentiaries and the armed forces.” (*ibid.*, *Maclean’s*, April 21, 1962).

The official name of the American germ warfare research program was United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases or USAMRIID. The headquarters for this United States Army unit was at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

What did USAMRIID and this Canadian report on germ warfare have to do with Seventh-day Adventists? Surely Adventists, who have always believed and taught the principles of healthful living, and the dangers of drugs, were not involved in the development of the most horrid weapons ever known to mankind?

“Many of the human guinea pigs in the latter group [American] have been young Seventh-Day Adventists,” Sidney Katz reported. “Pacifists by conviction, they prefer to engage in nonmilitant activities while in the army.” (*ibid.*, *Maclean’s*, April 21, 1962, emphasis supplied).

Could this report be true? If so, how and when did Seventh-day Adventists become involved in germ warfare experiments? On March 20, 1969, the *Review and Herald* reported on a special secret project of USAMRIID called “Project Whitecoat.”

Adventist Involvement In Project Whitecoat

“Adventist medical servicemen were known to be highly motivated for humanitarian service,” the *Review and Herald* reported. “Thus the Seventh-day Adventist Church was approached to ascertain whether this would be considered something an Adventist serviceman might be able to volunteer for.” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969, emphasis supplied).

And what was the response of the “sane” Adventist leadership to this request of the United States government to use young Adventist boys, barely out of academy, as human guinea pigs? Did the leadership agree to put Adventist young men in harms way?

“After thorough study, the Medical Department of the General Conference and the General Conference Committee agreed that this was humanitarian service of the highest type,” the article stated, “and that any Adventist serviceman might feel free to volunteer.” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969, emphasis supplied).

“Since that time [1954-1969] almost 1,400 American Adventist servicemen already in the Army Medical Service as noncombatants have volunteered for Project Whitecoat,” the article continued. “They have volunteered as subjects to evaluate mature medical studies in the relentless search for defense against diseases.” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969, emphasis supplied).

Was it possible that the experiments of the United States Army on the reaction of Adventist young men to dangerous germ warfare substances be considered “mature?” This is a question that should be carefully and prayerfully reconsidered.

As the name implies, USAMRIID carries on research in infectious diseases. The particular focus probably could be stated as research in the field of defense against biological weapons or more familiarly known as biological warfare. Volunteers for research in human subjects are needed. These volunteers are recruited from military personnel with a 1-A-O (noncombatant conscientious objector) classification during basic and Advanced Individual Training at the U.S. Army Medical Training Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Seventh-day Adventists compose more than half those taking the 1-A-O basic training, and are strongly oriented toward humanitarian ideals. The volunteer unit at USAMRIID is composed mostly of Seventh-day Adventists.

Clark Smith, Director of the National Service Organization, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1969. (emphasis supplied).

The words “infectious diseases,” “biological weapons,” “biological warfare,” and “human subjects” are totally foreign to pioneer Adventist thinking. It is incredible that the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church would even consider a remote connection with germ warfare experiments in light of the message from God to the Church in regard to the use of natural foods, healthful living, and against the use of drugs, tobacco, and other harmful substances.

“I was shown that more deaths have been caused by drug-taking than from all other causes combined,” Ellen White wrote. “Multitudes of physicians and multitudes of drugs have cursed the inhabitants of the earth, *and have carried thousands and tens of thousands to untimely graves.*” (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4, pages 51, 52, emphasis supplied).

The Beginning Of the American Germ Warfare Experiments

For one thing this research goes back to the 1953-1954 period with the original concept for study to determine the vulnerability of man to attack with biological weapons and to test the efficacy of Q fever and tularemia vaccines. *Volunteer subjects were needed for the study.* With the known humanitarian ideals of Seventh-day Adventists, the Army Surgeon General at the time, Major General George E. Armstrong, approached the General Conference officers to ask if there would be any objection by the church if some of its members were to volunteer for such study. The [GC] officers investigated the matter and replied that inasmuch as the results of such studies would benefit all mankind, church members could feel free to volunteer if after understanding the program they wished to do so.

ibid., Clark Smith, Director, National Service Organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1969. (emphasis supplied).

This report by Clark Smith reveals that the original purpose of Project Whitecoat was to “determine the vulnerability of man to attack with biological weapons.” This statement also discloses how the Seventh-day Adventist Church became involved. The Army needed human subjects (guinea pigs) so the Surgeon General (Major General George E. Armstrong) “approached the General Conference officers.” The date for the beginning of SDA involvement (1954) is significant. Smith stated that the germ warfare experiments “goes back to the 1953-1954 period.” What was taking place in SDA history at that time? Not only was SDA Church leadership reaching out to the world for recognition and acceptance, but the following year, 1955, SDA Church leadership would reach out the hand of fellowship and brotherhood to churches of Babylon in the Evangelical conferences of 1955-56.

Later statements in the *Review and Herald* article reveal that Major Armstrong flattered the General Conference leadership by telling them how wonderful Seventh-day Adventists are because they believe in “the benefit of all mankind.” If ever there was a snow job, this was it.

Let us face facts for once. The Bible states that all true Christians will be despised by the nations of earth. “And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake,” Jesus said. (Matthew 24:9b). “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” the apostle Paul stated. (2 Timothy 3:12). The realistic opinion of the United States Army toward Seventh-day Adventists was that Adventists were the only ones dumb enough to volunteer their young men, just recently out of

academy, for such a dangerous health risk project! The proof in this statement is the fact that only Seventh-day Adventist young men volunteered for Project Whitecoat.

Adventist Draftees and Project Whitecoat

“Today [1963], after eight consecutive years of continuous work, Operation Whitecoat is still going,” Don Roth, stated. “*And it has been manned exclusively by Seventh-day Adventist volunteers.*” (Don A. Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, “Operation Whitecoat,” Part 2, October 15, 1963, emphasis supplied).

“At this writing the number of Seventh-day Adventist servicemen who have participated in Operation Whitecoat totals in the hundreds,” Roth stated. “New men are brought into the program every year.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/15/63, emphasis supplied).

Actually there were about two thousand Adventist boys who participated in Project Whitecoat. According to Colonel Dan Crozier, head of Whitecoat, the project ended in 1973 with the end of the draft. (See below).

“Headquarters for the project is at Fort Detrick, near Frederick, Maryland, but auxiliary branches of the operation are maintained at nearby Walter Reed Medical Center,” Roth stated. “Today [1963] *a large contingent of Seventh-day Adventist servicemen continue to participate in this type of volunteer work.*” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/15/63, emphasis supplied).

“During this period of training the Adventist draftees are given information concerning Operation Whitecoat,” Don Roth continued. “Two or three times each year the director of the project, Colonel Dan Crozier, of Frederick, Maryland, and Elder J. R. Nelson, secretary of the National Service Organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists travel to [Fort Sam Houston] Texas to interview possible volunteers for the project.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/15/63, emphasis supplied).

Notice first that at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the Adventist draftees were “given information concerning Operation Whitecoat.” Note carefully what the SDA draftees had to say about this information given to them:

“I remember believing the Q-fever project (Queensland fever) was designed to save lives of troops who might be exposed to this in the future as they were said to have been in WWII,” Harry Wiant wrote. “We were not told this was a ‘germ warfare’ project *as I understand it really was.* I for one, thought I was a modern ‘Walter Reed.’” (Harry V. Wiant, Jr., *Letter* to the author, dated at Morgantown, West Virginia, November 15, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“My primary objection to the Q-fever project was that *it was misrepresented to us as a humanitarian undertaking, not germ warfare*,” Wiant stated. “*The present political climate would never allow such studies*, I suspect.” *ibid.*, Wiant, *Letter*, 11/15/89, emphasis supplied).

“Why I did it I still don’t know,” Cesar Vega wrote. “I’m sure it was mostly peer pressure *and good old Adventist salesmanship*.” (Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989, emphasis supplied).

First I would like to say that in my particular case I participated in the experiment with my eyes open and with the feeling that I was contributing to the advance of medical knowledge. From the beginning I was told I would be taking part in a “Q” [Queensland] fever project. At that time I had never heard of “Q” fever, anyway, so I thought it was just another simple fever, never stopping to think of any extra pains or illness connected with it. How wrong I was.

ibid., Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989.

“We were told that if we did not volunteer we would receive combat duty overseas.” (*Telephone Interview* with an anonymous Whitecoat volunteer from the state of Michigan).

“I volunteered for this experiment so I would not be sent overseas,” Wilson Wynn stated. (Wilson Wynn, *Letter* to the author, dated at Hendersonville, North Carolina, October 12, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“Most of the men who took part were draftees who chose Whitecoat rather than go to Korea or Vietnam.” (John E. Keplinger, Chaplain (COL.) AUS, Ret. *Letter* to the author, dated, October 12, 1989).

“The Whitecoat project was terminated in January 1973 *with the end of the draft*.” (Colonel Dan Crozier, USA MC, Ret., Commanding Officer, USAMRIID [Project Whitecoat], *Letter*, to the author, dated at Frederick, Maryland, November 7, 1989, emphasis supplied).

The Whitecoat experiments ended with the draft because without the draft there would be no provocation to entice SDA servicemen to volunteer as human guinea pigs. If the United States decides to implement the draft again, then more “volunteers” would be available for germ warfare experimental programs. If the draft is again activated, would the new volunteers again be Seventh-day Adventists?

Recruited or Not Recruited?

In 1989, Elder Charles E. Bracebridge, then Director of the National Service Organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, stated in a telephone interview that, “I went to Fort Sam Houston several times with Clark Smith and we simply put up a poster telling about Project Whitecoat. We did not recruit the men who volunteered for the Whitecoat experiments.”

However, this statement by Bracebridge was not in harmony with the following statement made by Clark Smith in the *Review and Herald* interview:

Volunteers for research in human subjects are needed. These volunteers are recruited from military personnel with a 1-A-O (noncombatant conscientious objector) classification during basic and Advanced Individual Training at the U.S. Army Medical Training Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Seventh-day Adventists compose more than half those taking the 1-A-O basic training, and are strongly oriented toward humanitarian ideals. The volunteer unit at USAMRIID [United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, i.e., Whitecoat] is composed mostly of Seventh-day Adventists.

Clark Smith, National Service Organization, *Review and Herald*, "Project Whitecoat" (November 27, 1969) (emphasis supplied).

Notice that in this statement Project Whitecoat is admitted to be a joint U.S. Army/Seventh-day Adventist Church effort to recruit "volunteers" for Project Whitecoat. "Two or three times each year" Colonel Dan Crozier of the U.S. Army and Elder J. R. Nelson of the General Conference went to Fort Sam Houston to interview Seventh-day Adventist young men into Project Whitecoat.

Also observe that the "volunteers" were "recruited from military personnel with a 1-A-O (noncombatant/conscientious objector) classification," and this recruiting was done "at the U.S. Army Medical Training Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas." A personal friend of the author stated that, at the time of his graduation [1957] from Mount Ellis Academy, Bozeman, Montana, he was "recruited" by General Conference NSO representatives. Adventist young boys were "recruited" at the high school and college level. Cesar Vega stated that while at La Sierra College, "I was told of the experiments for the first time (it wasn't called the Whitecoat Project yet)." (Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989).

"I don't recall how they recruited us," G. R. Bietz recalled. "I remember a man from the conference, I can still see his face, but I don't recall his name." (G. R. Bietz, Associate Director and Treasurer, Home Health Education Service, *Telephone Interview*, November 9, 1989).

Proving the Recruiting Allegation

Clark Smith, the Director of the National Service Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the one man in charge of Whitecoat volunteers, stated in the *Review and Herald* interview that, "Seventh-day Adventists compose more than half those taking the 1-A-O basic training." Don Roth stated that, "Operation Whitecoat is still going [1963]. . . and it has been manned exclusively by Seventh-day Adventist volunteers." (Don A Roth, *The Youth's Instructor*, 10/15/63). Robert L. Mole, Chief, Chaplain Service of the *Jerry L. Pettis* MEMORIAL VETERANS HOSPITAL at Loma Linda, California, and Chaplain of the Whitecoat project stated, "Incidentally one-half of all Conscientious Objectors in American Military Service. . . were Seventh-day Adventists." (*ibid.*, *Letter*, 11/2./89, emphasis supplied).

“Another example of noncombatant heroism while in the service of their country is “Operation Whitecoat,” the *SDA Encyclopedia* states, “a project involving medical experimentation, *staffed entirely by SDA volunteers. . . .*” (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, Second Revised Edition, Art. “Noncombatancy,” emphasis supplied).

Our questions are these. If Seventh-day Adventists compose half of those taking the 1-A-O basic training, why was Project Whitecoat “manned exclusively by Seventh-day Adventist volunteers?” Whitecoat volunteers stated that they volunteered because they did not want to serve in Korea or Vietnam. They were told that if they “volunteered they would not have to serve overseas.” Did not the other fifty percent of noncombatants, non-Seventh-day Adventists training at Fort Sam Houston, also wish not to serve in Korea or Vietnam?

Germ Warfare Experiments At Fort Dugway, Utah

On March 24, 1968, sixteen years after the germ warfare experiments began, the *Newark Sunday News* published an *Associated Press* report that came over the wire from Salt Lake City, Utah. The article stated in part:

“State officials are convinced that a mist of lethal nerve gas was blown 30 miles from a top-secret Army chemical warfare test area [Fort Dugway, Utah] on March 13, killing 6,400 sheep in western Utah’s Skull Valley.” (*Newark Sunday News*, March 24, 1968).

The Army said yesterday that its investigation will continue in the remote region 50 miles southwest of Salt Lake City and that “no definite cause of death” has yet been determined.

“We are as positive as medical science can ever be that the Army tests caused the deaths,” said Dr. D. A. Osguthorpe, a special adviser to Gov. Calvin L. Rampton. . .

“We have narrowed the cause of death to an organic phosphate compound – the kind that is a component of nerve gas,” Osguthorpe said yesterday. “Since the Army has admitted conducting the nerve gas test the day before the sheep began dying, that would seem to clear the matter up.”

ibid., *Newark Sunday News*, March 24, 1968

“The Army at first denied any connection when the deaths were first reported in midweek,” the *Newark News* reported further. “Friday, a high-level Army team was flown to Salt Lake City from Washington to investigate.” (*ibid.*).

Skull Valley is rough, semi-desert country, inhabited by a few Basque sheep herders and about 30 Indians. The area is a wind-carved series of peaks, valleys and canyons. It is primarily used for livestock grazing, some alfalfa and small fields of grain.

No people, or livestock other than sheep, were affected. The area hit was described by Osguthorpe as about five miles wide and 20 miles long. The sheep were first stricken with paralysis, then died. . .

ibid., *Newark Sunday News*, March 24, 1968

“He [Osguthorpe] described the suspect compounds as ‘one of the newer phosphate compounds, some of which are quite beneficial to veterinary medicine,’” the article continued. “However he said others ‘in the family’ of compounds ‘are among the most toxic known to science.’” (*ibid.*, emphasis supplied).

The Army’s Dugway Proving Grounds is used for chemical and biological warfare testing. It is located 15 to 35 miles from where the sheep were found dead or dying.

The Army acknowledged that “routine operations” involving aircraft were conducted [in] March at Dugway.

Sen. Frank Moss, D-Utah, said he learned earlier in the week that the Army had fired 55mm shells packing nerve gas that day, while 320 gallons of the substance was reported released from a high-speed aircraft in the area.

ibid., *Newark Sunday News*, March 24, 1968. (emphasis supplied).

United Press International Follow-up Report

Two months later the *Newark Sunday News* published a *United Press International* follow-up report titled, “Utah Sheep Deaths Spark Nerve Gas Probe.” The article stated in part:

“A great deal has been learned. . . from laboratory experiments to solve the mysterious fate of the sheep,” the report stated. “It has been discovered, for example, *that death can result from extremely minute quantities of the chemical in a way never suspected before.*” (*Newark Sunday News*, May 26, 1968, emphasis supplied).

The phrase “nerve gas” is misleading, army authorities told UPI in a series of interviews. The chemical is un-aerosol spray, about the consistency of crankcase oil, rather than a gas. Though it affects the nerves, the result is almost instant death, rather than mere incapacitation. The army describes the agent as an “organo-phosphorous compound.” The exact composition is classified.

Death may occur within a few minutes if the agent is inhaled, or within an hour if only a drop of it gets on the skin of any part of the body.

ibid., *Newark Sunday News*, May 26, 1968.

“The usual symptoms are a blackout. (The agent causes the pupils of the eyes to close or narrow to slits),” the article stated, “extremely labored breathing—because the nerves controlling the muscles of the heart and lungs have gone wild—and fatal spasms and convulsions.” (*ibid.*).

The death of the sheep was originally mysterious because they exhibited none of these symptoms. They merely lost coordination in their legs, and became weak and languid. After they had gone down they often lived for a day or two and remained sufficiently alert to struggle when a stranger approached.

ibid., *Newark Sunday News*, May 26, 1968.

Adventist Leadership Responds To Adverse Media Reports

The following February the NBC television program, “First Tuesday,” presented a program on germ warfare experiments. On this program several Whitecoat participants were interviewed. In response to this program, and to the adverse news of the sheep deaths at the Whitecoat proving grounds at Fort Dugway, Utah, the *Review and Herald* published an article in defense of the Seventh-day Adventist involvement in Project Whitecoat. The sub-title of the article was, “Adventist Medics in America Volunteer to Serve Humanity by Assisting in Disease Research in Project Whitecoat.” The article appeared in the “North American News” section of the *Review and Herald*.

Many North American readers of the Review saw the NBC television program February 4 entitled “First Tuesday.” As a result, some church members have wondered about the participation of Seventh-day Adventist noncombatant medics as volunteers in the U.S. Army’s Project Whitecoat.

This television program dealt with the efforts of the United States to prepare for chemical and biological warfare (CBW) as it exists in the world today. The question is, How can Adventist servicemen participate in such preparation and still be truly noncombatant?

“Project Whitecoat,” *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969. (emphasis supplied).

“As a result [of the television program], some church members have wondered about the participation.” This problem came about because of SDA Church leadership’s policy of keeping the laity in the dark. Indeed, most SDA Church members, even to this day, know nothing about the Seventh-day Adventist involvement in the germ warfare experiments of Project Whitecoat.

Why were some Seventh-day Adventist Church members concerned? Because, “This television program dealt with the efforts of the United States to prepare for chemical and biological warfare.” After watching the “First Tuesday” television interviews, SDA Church members were asking, “How can Adventist servicemen participate in such preparation [for war] and still be truly noncombatant?”

“A viewer with no background information of Project Whitecoat could easily have wondered how an Adventist noncombatant could be involved in such activity.” the *Review and Herald* article stated. (*ibid.*).

And who is responsible for the laity not having a background on Seventh-day Adventist participation in Project Whitecoat? This has always been a problem with Church leadership. This whole episode with Project Whitecoat proves that the laity of the Church never do have enough “background information” of the devious policies implemented by the leadership. The laity, in most cases, are not properly informed of Church involvement in worldly policies. Again, most Seventh-day Adventists have never heard of Project Whitecoat. If the Adventist people knew the truth about Project Whitecoat they would be appalled. Leadership’s statement that, “A viewer. . . could easily have wondered how an Adventist noncombatant could be involved in such activity,” just about says it all.

“In order to effectively evaluate vaccines, drugs, or methods of treatment, it was necessary to secure a group of volunteers who would submit themselves as subjects [guinea pigs] to evaluate the mature

findings [?] of the research group developing this defense against disease,” the *Review and Herald* article continued. “For convenience the group should be small enough to be screened easily, yet large enough to yield the number necessary for the study. . .” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969).

This statement reveals that SDA Church leadership considered the findings of the research group to be “mature” and just. With this “maturity” in mind please review the news story of how the nerve gas experiments conducted at Fort Dugway, Utah, got away from the “mature” study group and killed over six thousand sheep!

“It is of more than passing interest that the safeguards to the health of those in the program are such that *not one participant has had any permanent adverse effects because of the studies.*” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969, emphasis supplied).

Notice that the readers of the *Review and Herald* were told that “not one participant has had any permanent adverse effects because of the studies.” And yet, it has come to light that indeed one Seventh-day Adventist boy died directly from the effects of an injection of what the Army called Q-Fever vaccine. Many Whitecoat volunteers stated that they were deathly sick from the experiments. (See below).

The church has reason to join those in the medical profession who acclaim the selfless courage of these volunteers. Though some have served with Project Whitecoat without participating in studies involving exposure to infectious micro-organisms, there have been hundreds of the participants in various studies who have undergone the rigors of a disease so that clinical knowledge of it might be obtained. Though no human subject is ever knowingly exposed to an infectious disease producing agent unless it is known that the vaccine drug, or method of treatment under study is adequate to effect a cure or that the disease is self-limiting, nevertheless it requires courage of a high type to accept willingly such disease producing agents into one’s body.
ibid., *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969.

Does the SDA Church have reason to join the world in worldly policies and experiments? Notice the following four important points in this statement:

(1) “The church has reason to join,” leadership justifies their position. The truth is that the Church has no place in politics or government projects. This is especially true concerning experiments with deadly drugs and germ warfare development. Have not Seventh-day Adventists always been champions of the separation of Church and State?

(2) “There have been hundreds of the participants in various studies who have undergone the rigors of a disease. . .” Actually there have been over two thousand.

(3) “No human subject is ever knowingly exposed to an infectious disease producing agent unless it is known that the vaccine drug, or method of treatment under study is adequate to effect a cure or

that the disease is self-limiting.” In response to this statement, note again the news report in which over 6,400 sheep died from the nerve gas experiments at Fort Dugway, Utah. These Associated Press and United Press International reports speak for themselves.

(4) “To accept willingly such disease producing agents into one’s body.” This statement should be considered in the light of the Ellen White statements on the use of drugs, “I was shown that more deaths have been caused by drug-taking than from all other causes combined.” (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4, page 51). What more could be said! To introduce a disease into the body from a germ warfare substance is much worse than a legal drug in the context of which Ellen White was referring to.

Over a period of years the descriptions of volunteer studies and their findings have been and continue to be published in top professional journals and distributed throughout the world. Knowing that this medical information for the benefit of mankind can be obtained in no other way has been sufficient reason for their participation.

ibid., *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969.

Evidently this is leadership’s justification for endorsing Project Whitecoat. But, consider these questions. Did the children of Israel need to experiment with disease and drugs for the benefit of heathen nations surrounding them? Did God require them to surrender their bodies for dangerous experiments for the development of any kind of warfare? How about the Church in the days of Elijah? Were the people of God to submit their bodies for experiments to Baal worshipers? I think not. Times have not changed! “For I am the Lord, I change not.” (Malachi 3:6). “The Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:17b).

GC Committee Appointed To Investigate Project Whitecoat

Six months later the *Review and Herald* published a second article on Project Whitecoat. This article was written in response to allegations that Seventh-day Adventists were involved in the “development” of germ warfare weapons. In this article the leadership stated emphatically that the Church’s involvement in germ warfare research was “defensive only,” and because the research was “defensive” and not “offensive,” the Church was justified in recommending that young Adventist boys volunteer for Whitecoat experiments.

“Some reports have implied that Adventist men are connected with research work *directed toward improving biological weapons*,” Clark Smith, General Conference Director of the National Service Organization stated. “To bring this issue into the open and to clarify it, the National Service Organization Committee of the General Conference requested the General Conference officers to set up a study committee to bring in a report on the matter.” (Clark Smith, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1969, emphasis supplied).

The first step was to meet and set down questions that should be asked to obtain the information needed to make an evaluation of the matter. Because many of these questions would involve detailed research to supply

the answers, these questions were passed on to the commanding officer of USAMRIID, Col. Dan Crozier, USA MC. Then a subcommittee of eight was chosen by the committee chairman, Neal C. Wilson, to go to Fort Detrick and interview Colonel Crozier and ask further questions. This group of eight had two physicians, two educators, and departmental leaders. This subcommittee reported its findings to the larger committee which reported to the Autumn Council.

ibid., Clark Smith, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1969. (emphasis supplied).

Notice the eight steps taken by the General Conference when seeking important information. (1) A large subcommittee is chosen. (2) A small subcommittee of eight is chosen by the chairman of the larger committee, in this case, Neal C. Wilson. Wilson would later become General Conference President. (3) The small subcommittee of eight traveled to Fort Detrick, Maryland, to talk with the commanding officer of USAMRIID, Col. Dan Crozier. (4) The small subcommittee believes everything told to them by one man, the commanding officer, Colonel Dan Crozier. Remember, this is the same man who stated that: “no serviceman has ever received any vaccine until he and some of his staff of researchers had tried it in their own bodies for any untoward effects.” (See below). (5) The small subcommittee reports what they were told by Colonel Crozier to the large subcommittee. (6) The large committee, chaired by Neal C. Wilson, reports to the General Conference Autumn Council. This report to the Autumn Council is based on the report of the eight-man subcommittee which, in turn, is based on the testimony of one man, Colonel Dan Crozier, the man in charge of Project Whitecoat. (8) The General Conference Autumn Council then makes a supposed rational decision on the testimony of the one man at the head of Project Whitecoat.

“The United States and all other strong powers in the world are keeping abreast of knowledge in biological warfare,” Clark Smith stated. “*This could be designated as being in the field of offensive warfare and is under the direction of other commands in the Army [rather] than the medical service [alone], which funds and controls the research in defense against infectious disease agents engaged in by USAMRIID.*” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

Notice that Clark Smith, director of the National Service Organization of the General Conference, admits that, “This could be designated as being in the field of offensive warfare,” and that the Army “medical service. . . funds and controls the research.” This statement forever settles the question of whether the experiments of Project Whitecoat were offensive or defensive!

“The fact that these two research programs are situated on the same Army post, Fort Detrick, has led many people to unwarranted conclusions as to their connection,” Clark Smith stated. “*About the only connection is a piece of experimental equipment costing in excess of a million dollars.*” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

“It should be pointed out that since the published work of USAMRIID is freely available,” Clark Smith added, “*those working in the offensive field may utilize this information as any other interested party might do.*” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

These two statements reveal that no matter how you look at it, Seventh-day Adventist participation in Whitecoat was “utilized” for both “offensive” and “defensive” germ warfare development. Still, SDA Church leadership must justify their position.

“However, in the opinion of this study committee the work of the Adventist volunteers in USAMRIID [Whitecoat] is entirely in the defensive area of biological warfare and thus humanitarian in nature,” Clark Smith stated. “The committee feels that the efforts and sacrifices of these volunteers are perfectly proper for the Christian who wishes to enter this field.” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

This paragraph amplifies the fact that this program was primarily concerned with “biological warfare.” The statements are made over and over again that the involvement of Seventh-day Adventists was limited to the “defensive area of biological warfare.” Should a Christian be involved in any kind of biological germ warfare – offensive or defensive? More important, should a Seventh-day Adventist, who supposedly believes in health reform and healthful living, be involved in biological germ warfare? We are soldiers of the cross. Is not our warfare as Seventh-day Adventist Christians between Christ and Satan, and not between the nations of earth?

In a rebuttal to this self-justifying position of SDA Church leadership, Martin Turner stated, “A conscience that is sensitive to the dangers of coffee and wedding rings, *but fails to be concerned with the moral implications of participation in biological warfare research, and in war itself, must seem paradoxical to a great many thinking people.*” (Martin D. Turner, “Project Whitecoat,” *Spectrum*, Summer, 1970, emphasis supplied).

“A small note of human interest was the remark of Colonel Crozier that *no serviceman has ever received any vaccine until he and some of his staff of researchers had tried it in their own bodies for any untoward effects,*” Clark Smith added. “But every advance in the knowledge of medicine must ultimately be tested in the human volunteer [Adventist] before it can be passed on to the world. Some risk is always involved.” (*ibid.*, Clark Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

“No serviceman has ever received any vaccine until he [Colonel Crozier] and some of his staff of researchers had tried it in their own bodies.” Anyone who would believe this statement is completely out of touch with reality. How could the General Conference officers be so naive as to believe such a statement. When the author brought this statement to the attention of one of the Whitecoat volunteers and asked if he believed that Colonel Crozier actually injected himself with the Q-Fever serum, he laughed long and loud.

“To depend upon the opinions of Commanders and NSO Officials would be an injustice to every Whitecoat Volunteer,” Robert Mole stated. “*I do not know or never met any officer who actually risked his life by injections, etc., in the Whitecoat project.*” (Robert L. Mole, DS, Chief, Chaplain Service, Jerry

L. Pettis MEMORIAL VETERANS HOSPITAL, Department of Veterans Affairs, *Letter* to the author, dated at Loma Linda, California, November 2, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“The Hot Zone”

The Startling Report Of A Whitecoat Volunteer

The third Whitecoat reunion was held at the Frederick, Maryland, SDA Church in September, 1998. In response to this reunion the *Adventist Review*, September 24, 1998, published an article entitled, “A Coat Of Many Colors – Looking Back at Operation Whitecoat.” The article was penned by Bill Knott, associate editor. In this article the author alluded that there were still “critics” of the Church’s endorsement of Project Whitecoat. One endnote to his article referred the reader to this author’s unpublished manuscript, *The Greatest Conspiracy*.

In response to the *Adventist Review* article placed on the Internet, September 24, 1998, David Dishneau of the Associated Press, penned an article entitled, “Adventist Debate Church Role in Vietnam Era Germ Warfare Research.” Before preparing his article for the news service, Dishneau contacted this author for a comment. When the article hit the Associated Press news network the article quoted this author as stating: “Pioneer Adventists would turn in their graves if they knew of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s involvement in Project Whitecoat.” This was an accurate quote and is, in fact, true. Indeed, pioneer Adventists would be abhorred of any involvement in a project like Whitecoat that would put Adventist young men in grave danger.

Many newspapers carried the article. To name a few in which the article appeared were: *Star Telegram*, Dallas - Fort Worth, Texas, Oct. 8, 1998; *Washington Post*, Washington DC “Religion Today,” Oct. 8, 1998; *San Jose Mercury News*, Oct. 17, 1998; and *Chicago Sun Times*, Ernest Tucker, Religion Editor.

After reading this article in his local newspaper, Lester Bartholomew (a Whitecoat participant) called from his wilderness home in the northwest. The shocking story of this Whitecoat volunteer must be recorded here:

“I learned about Project Whitecoat while I was at boot-camp at Fort Sam Houston in 1966,” Lester recalled. “I volunteered and participated in three projects. I think I was the only one who did three projects.”

“On my first project I was injected with ‘Tularemia,’ pronounced, ‘Tu-la-reem-ee-ah,’” Lester stated. “It was also known as, ‘Black Plague.’ Another name for the virus was ‘Rabbit Fever,’ a virus found in rabbits in Tulare County, California. They were working on diseases that could be transferred from animals to humans.”

“There were forty-five Seventh-day Adventist young men on the first project I participated in,” Lester recalled. “All forty-five became very ill with a high fever.”:

“Before they injected us with the virus they tested our motor skills with a mechanical device,” Lester stated. “It was their intention to test our motor skills again after we came down with the fever. However, I lost consciousness for several days and awoke with a high fever of 106 degrees. They had me packed in ice and were attempting to draw blood from my toes because my veins had collapsed.”

“After thirty-two years I still suffer adverse reactions from the ‘Tularemia’ virus,” Lester stated. “I attended the first Whitecoat Reunion held at the Frederick, Maryland SDA Church, October 10, 1989, and they were still trying to find a cure for the ‘Tularemia’ virus at that time.”

Project Whitecoat – Offensive Or Defensive

“When we were not ‘on project’ we were given other jobs,” Lester stated. “I was chosen to work in the ‘Hot Zone’ in the offensive Germ Warfare area behind the big fence. My code name was ‘Two Geese.’ They told me that if anyone asked what I was doing, I was to answer that I was taking care of two geese.”

“My job was to package and ship dangerous germ warfare chemicals,” Lester recalled. “There was one other Whitecoat boy from Tennessee working with me. We did not have the packing materials that we have today, so we packed the stuff in cotton and then surrounded it with dry ice. They told us that if we broke one of the two vials in each package it would wipe out the state of Maryland.” [Maybe Washington D.C., or even Seventh-day Adventist headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland!]

“At the 1989 Whitecoat Reunion I visited Building 427 where I worked when I was not on a project,” Lester stated. “The building behind 427 is all boarded up now. That is where they kept the ‘hot stuff.’ They said they cannot destroy the building because whatever is left in there would wipe out Maryland.”

“It was I who sent the chemicals to Fort Dugway, Utah that killed 6,400 sheep in 1968,” Lester added remorsefully. “Later, it was revealed that two shepherd boys were killed by the dangerous substance. I also shipped germ warfare chemicals to Guam for use in Vietnam.”

“At the time I believed I was doing a service for God and Country,” Lester stated regretfully. “At the 1989 Whitecoat reunion there was a banner across the front of the Frederick, Maryland Church which stated: ‘For God and Country – For the Army and the Church.’ Now I feel that I was lied to by the Army, and also SDA Church leaders.”

This duty performed by Lester Bartholomew most definitely could be considered as offensive duty by a Whitecoat volunteer. There is no way that a program like Project Whitecoat could be separated from offensive germ warfare development.

More Justification By SDA Church Leadership

“Of the more than 1,500 Adventist servicemen who have participated in Project Whitecoat, hundreds have been sick while engaged in the studies,” Clark Smith, Seventh-day Adventist Service Organization stated. “But there has been no documented medical proof of any permanent damage to anyone. . . .” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

To have to comment on this statement is totally redundant. The truth is that, not hundreds, but thousands of Adventist young men have been sick. According to their figures, “more than 1,500” had volunteered for Whitecoat from its beginning in 1954 through 1969 at the writing of this article. However, “The Whitecoat Project was terminated in 1973 with the ending of the draft.” (Colonel Dan Crozier, *Letter* to the author, dated, November 7, 1989). Project Whitecoat continued four more years beyond 1969. It is not unreasonable to believe that 500 more Adventist servicemen volunteered during the four additional years. That would bring the total number of Whitecoat volunteers to approximately 2,000, rather than 1,500.

Evidently the General Conference officers were convinced that, because “there has been no documented medical proof of any permanent damage” at that time (1969), it was perfectly acceptable that Adventist boys would become sick from the experiments as long as they recovered. Only a fool would take such a position. No one could predict what the long term effects would be. The whole program was experimental, was it not? A good example of this would be the devastating health problems servicemen have suffered from the military’s use of “Agent Orange” in Vietnam, and the medical problems suffered by those who were exposed to germ warfare substances in the more recent “Gulf War.”

In response to the question, “Did the committee members feel that they had adequate information on which to evaluate Adventist participation in Project Whitecoat?” Clark Smith replied as follows:

Yes. I questioned each member of the subcommittee of eight before we left the office of Colonel Crozier to see if any of them had further questions they wanted to ask. All stated that they were fully satisfied with the answers they had received. *Their report provided solid evidence that the General Conference officers gave sound counsel 15 years ago, when Project Whitecoat was initiated [1954], when they ruled that any Adventist serviceman who was given an opportunity to volunteer for the program could feel free to do so inasmuch as humanitarian,* rather than destructive, purposes were being served.

ibid., Clark Smith, *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1969. (emphasis supplied).

“All stated that they were fully satisfied with the answers they had received.” This statement proves that the committee was satisfied with what they were told in Colonel Dan Crozier’s office. They had

accepted the testimony of one man for their report on Project Whitecoat, the commanding officer of USAMRIID.

“Their report provided solid evidence that the General Conference officers gave sound counsel 15 years ago.” Seldom, if ever, has the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists ever admitted to making a mistake. Again, the General Conference officers made their decision on a report that was the testimony of one man, Colonel Dan Crozier, the man in charge of Project Whitecoat. This decision by the General Conference officers in 1969 could in no way justify the decision fifteen years previous by SDA Church leadership that placed immature Adventist boys in harms way. Yet the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists never passes up an opportunity to justify their actions and policies.

“I would like to say that the current [1969] agitation over Project Whitecoat illustrates anew the importance of getting the facts and getting them straight,” Clark Smith concluded. “People should be extremely slow to believe rumors or ‘information’ that has not been well authenticated.” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

“Our church program can bear examination,” Smith added. “There is nothing to hide. *Leaders are always glad to answer questions and provide information.*” (*ibid.*, Smith, *Review and Herald*, 11/27/69, emphasis supplied).

“Getting the facts and getting them straight.” That is the purpose of this research. One Whitecoat volunteer, calling from Michigan asked, “What is the purpose of writing about Project Whitecoat?” The answer is, “getting the facts and getting them straight.” However, the General Conference officers have had a long standing policy, i.e. whenever anyone tries to get the facts and get them straight, it is considered to be a “current agitation.” There was indeed something to hide. (See below).

Eyewitness Reports Of Fort Dugway Whitecoat Experiments

In 1963 *The Youth's Instructor* published a two-part report titled, “Operation Whitecoat.” The author was Don A. Roth. The first part covered the story of Whitecoat germ warfare experiments conducted at Fort Dugway, Utah. The article was based primarily on the eyewitness experience of Thomas Kopco, a Whitecoat volunteer.

Twenty-six years later, in 1989, Thomas Kopco was interviewed by this author. Also at this time a written account of what actually took place during the Whitecoat experiments at the Fort Dugway proving grounds was submitted to this author by Thomas Kopco. Portions of the *Youth's Instructor* article are quoted below with commentary on the event from Thomas Kopco himself.

Youth's Instructor Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“Two hours earlier Tom [Kopco] and his fellow soldiers, all young Seventh-day Adventists, had left Walter Reed Hospital on the outskirts of Washington, D.C.,” the *Youth’s Instructor* Whitecoat article began. “They were told that they would be taking a trip, and that it would be necessary for them to go to a distant area [Fort Dugway, Utah]. The project would involve field study, and thus give information that could not be readily obtainable in laboratory studies.” (Don A. Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, “Operation Whitecoat,” Part One, October 8, 1963).

[Note:– In the “laboratory studies” the Q-Fever virus was inhaled directly from a canister. In the “field studies” the substance was either dropped onto the “Adventist volunteers” from an aircraft, or released and spread throughout the testing area with large fans to “thus give information that could not be readily obtainable in laboratory studies.”]

Thomas Kopco’s Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“I volunteered for Project Whitecoat and the following year, 1955, I was among the first group of Seventh-day Adventist servicemen to serve in a highly classified experimental germ warfare project conducted at Fort Dugway, Utah,” Tom Kopco commented later. “This project consisted of experiments with a substance called Q fever.” (Thomas Kopco, *Document Statement*, signed, October 10, 1989, emphasis supplied).

[Note:– This statement by an eyewitness reveals three most important facts. (1) That there was more than one Whitecoat experiment conducted at Fort Dugway, Utah. Kopco was among the first group. (2) The experiments were “highly classified.” (3) The experiments involved Adventists in research in a “germ warfare project.” All three of these facts have been categorically denied by both the United States Army and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.]

Youth’s Instructor Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“[At] Fort Sam Houston, Texas. . . he [Kopco] had nearly completed his post induction basic training,” Don Roth continued “A colonel [Dan Croizer] and a representative of the General Conference National Service Organization [Elder J. R. Nelson] appeared at a special meeting and talked about an unusual medical research project and asked for volunteers. . .” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

Thomas Kopco’s Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“In 1954 I was drafted into the armed services,” Kopco stated thirty-six years later. “Although I was not a good Seventh-day Adventist at the time, my mother convinced me to register as a “conscientious objector.” I was stationed at Fort Sam Houston, an army base where all Seventh-day Adventist and all other 1-A-O inductees were sent by the army for special training.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89).

“A General Conference man , along with a high official of the army, came to Fort Sam Houston to seek volunteers for a secret government program called Project Whitecoat,” Tom Kopco continued.

“During this period of training the Adventist draftees are given information concerning Operation Whitecoat.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89).

[Note:– This statement again reaffirms that Adventist young men at Fort Sam Houston were recruited by high officials of the Army and the SDA Church. It does reaffirm that Project Whitecoat was a “secret government program.”]

“It sounded like a good way to serve my country, and, after all, *the program was endorsed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church*,” Kopco recalled. “Because my older brother had served his country in World War II, and my next two brothers during the Korean War, I was convinced that I, too, should do something for my country.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89).

At the Dugway Germ Warfare Proving Grounds

Youth’s Instructor Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“The very next day they were given physical examinations,” Don Roth stated. “Each soldier was issued special clothing and was told to appear at a certain time and place for further orders.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

Thomas Kopco’s Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“Colonel [W. D.] Tigertt was in charge of Operation Whitecoat at the time these experiments were conducted at Fort Dugway, Utah,” Tom Kopco wrote thirty six years later. “*The military doctors told us that we needed good kidneys for the Q fever project. So far, so good.*” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89, emphasis supplied).

Youth’s Instructor Story of Dugway Proving Ground

At the next command center the soldiers were divided into eight small groups. Each group was assigned to a station located several miles away from the center of the camp. The station consisted of a wooden platform, eight feet square and more than ten feet high, with seats built at various levels. Tom thought it was a strange-looking contraption. Each team found that they had several “mascots” – cages of monkeys and live guinea pigs.
ibid., Don A. Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, “Operation Whitecoat,” Part One, October 8, 1963. (emphasis supplied).

[Note:– The fact that the test was “located several miles away from the center of the camp” was not a good sign for the Adventist young boys. It is obvious from this statement that the Adventist volunteers were the real guinea pigs in this experiment.]

“The colonel in charge [W. D. Tigertt] readily admitted certain dangers in the experiment that was about to begin,” Don Roth continued. “He gave in detail the safeguards that had been incorporated

into the project, which would make it just as safe as the bus ride they had taken from the nearby city.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

[Note:– Colonel Tigertt “admitted certain dangers in the experiment?” This was an absurd overstatement to the first magnitude. The Colonel’s statement that the experiment would be “just as safe as the bus ride they had taken from the nearby city,” was a total misconception, if not an out and out lie.]

“The presence of the animals at the test site indicated that additional information was desired, which could only be determined through certain experimental procedures.” Don Roth stated further. (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

[Note:– It was obvious that the U.S. Army was testing to determine the effect of dangerous substances on both humans and animals. From the testimony of those who participated in the experiments, many animals died immediately from the experiment. Many human volunteers were deathly sick. No one knows the long-term effect of the highly toxic substances. See below.]

“This particular test was being held away from civilization,” Don Roth stated. “When the wind was blowing in the right direction and at the right velocity, the project would be under way.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63, emphasis supplied).

[Note:– In another experiment the Army made a miscalculation of wind directions. The result was that the wind carried the toxic substance over a mountain range and killed over 6,400 sheep. See above.]

“Each team and each person at a different ground location and at different altitudes from ground level,” Roth added further, “would respond differently to the situation [Q Fever gas].” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

“The Adventist volunteers [which were all of the above],” Roth continued, “were about to participate in a project called Operation Whitecoat [A Q-Fever experiment].” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

“When the group arrived at the experimental station area it was dark, but as the evening wore on, the air grew cold, even though the season was late June,” Don Roth wrote. “Only the eerie light from a lone lantern at the command station penetrated the darkness.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

“Several times the experiment was about to begin,” Roth stated, “but each time the wind shifted in another direction and the countdown was started all over again.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63, emphasis supplied).

“At nearly one o’clock in the morning conditions were just right and the experiment was begun,” Roth concluded. “There was a great deal of activity – vehicles moving, two-way radios blaring, and

officers dashing hither and yon. The volunteers knew that this was it. Then it was all over.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63, emphasis supplied).

What Really Happened At Station Zero

“The individuals who volunteered to serve in Whitecoat were as brave as any American, and in some ways even more courageous than many including officers,” Robert Mole stated. “So please tell the stories of the individual soldier rather than opinions of officers not present *nor having served as human experimental beings.*” (Robert L. Mole, DS, Chief, Chaplain Service, Jerry L. Pettis MEMORIAL VETERANS HOSPITAL, Department of Veterans Affairs, Letter to the author, dated at Loma Linda, California, November 2, 1989, emphasis supplied).

Thomas Kopco’s Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“As we sat on the wooden stations 20 feet high, along with real mice and monkeys, *a cool mist came over us,*” Tom Kopco recalled. “Just before that the officers had put on their gas masks. [again, not a good sign.] After we were exposed and on the way to decontamination, I overheard an officer say, ‘Those _____ Russians already know what we are doing here tonight.’” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89, emphasis supplied).

[Note:– The fact that Army personnel used “gas masks” proves the Q Fever substance was very toxic and dangerous. The fact that the Army was worried about the Russians learning of the Whitecoat experiments again proves Seventh-day Adventist involvement in germ warfare development.]

“Soldier Thomas Kopco, now youth pastor of the Tacoma Park, Maryland, Seventh-day Adventist church [1963], remembers what happened next,” the *Youth’s Instructor* article quoted. “Back at the center we were told to remove our clothing as quickly as possible. A warm shower came next, which was met with enthusiasm by the chilled soldiers.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

“We then went through an ultra-violet-light area and found ourselves in a room where our regular Army clothes were waiting for us,” the *Youth’s Instructor* quoted Kopco. “At the door of the building a bus was waiting to whisk us to the airport nearby. Within thirty-five minutes of “zero” hour we were airborne and heading back to Washington.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

Thomas Kopco’s Story of Dugway Proving Ground

“Some of the volunteers did not participate in the bomb experiment, but breathed the gas directly from a hose or canister,” Kopco wrote thirty-six years later. “The gas affected the volunteers in different ways. Some of us got deathly sick, others like myself, mildly sick, and were released after 30 days at Fort Detrick, Maryland.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89, emphasis supplied).

Cesar Vega's Story of Dugway Proving Ground

"That morning at 3:25 they took us in a covered van to a site in the desert about twenty-five miles from the base where we were staying (Fort Dugway, Utah)," Cesar Vega recalled. "They told us that the wind conditions had to be just right for the experiment. They told us we were going to be exposed to the "Q" virus by breathing the air around us." (Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989).

"The air would be generated by six fan-looking devices that would be spaced evenly and about forty feet from us," Vega continued. "We were sitting on field chairs next to four cages each containing a monkey." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89).

"The monkey that was next to me kept sticking his hand out like he wanted to shake hands," Vega recalled. "I was told by the attending physician not to touch the monkey or do anything to come in contact with it. The Doctor was Colonel [W. D.] Tigertt." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89).

"The ten of us sat evenly spaced with a monkey next to us for about forty minutes while the test was in progress," Vega stated. "We went back to our barracks and slept all that day." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89).

"The trip to the site was repeated again that evening," Vega recalled. "The test was conducted at about eleven or midnight." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89).

"*This time my monkey and three more were missing,*" Vega stated. "We laughed when one of the boys suggested that the monkeys were probably A.W.O.L." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89, emphasis supplied).

"Coming back to Detrick on the plane the sergeant next to me told me that my monkey, along with the other three, *had died that morning of `unknown causes,*" Vega stated. "I thought that was strange, because the monkeys didn't seem to be sick that evening." (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89, emphasis supplied).

"I have no first-hand knowledge of the Dugway experiments, although I concluded that Dugway was where the Whitecoats were taken in the flight described in the *Youth's Instructor* article," Michael Scofield wrote. "Research I have done in the files of the Utah State Historical Society *tend to confirm what was going on at Dugway.*" (Michael Scofield, *Letter* to the author, dated, October 14, 1989, emphasis supplied).

Whitecoat Experiments At Fort Detrick, Maryland

“I was in the (Q) fever experiment at Fort Detrick, MD,” G. R. Bietz wrote. “Some of us didn’t receive this gas and I was one of them, but I did not know that until four to six weeks later. I had no ill effects *but those that received the gas were very sick.*” (G. R. Bietz, Associate Director and Treasurer, HOME HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICE, *Letter* to the author, dated at Decatur, Georgia, October 31, 1989. (emphasis supplied).

“They put us in a large building [Fort Detrick, Maryland] where they gave us the Q-Fever gas through a mask type of device over our faces,” G. R. Bietz stated. “Some of us did not receive the gas.” (G. R. Bietz, Associate Director and Treasurer, Home Health Education Service, *Telephone Interview*, November 9, 1989).

“Several of us were taken to Fort Detrick, MD.,” Harry Wiant recalled. “*We were taken to a large tank and told to breath from a tube which would expose us to the disease.* Then we were confined to a barracks for over a month as I remember.” (Harry V. Wiant, Jr., *Letter* to the author, dated at Morgan town, West Virginia, November 15, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“We were treated very well, provided with hobby material and games, and treated with antibiotics,” Harry Wiant wrote. “*Some fellows got very sick. . . I have heard, perhaps 10th handed, that some have died from effects of the project, but I know of none personally.*” (*ibid.*, Wiant, *Letter*, 11/15/89, emphasis supplied).

Physical Reactions To the Q-Fever Virus

“It is of more than passing interest that the safeguards to the health of those in the [Whitecoat] program are such that not one participant has had any permanent adverse effects because of the studies.” (*ibid.*, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1969, emphasis supplied).

This statement is just not true. Many cases have been documented. In response to this false statement see documentation below.

When the thirty [Seventh-day Adventist] soldiers arrived at their own base they were immediately put into isolation wards. Some boys stayed for only a month, while others remained under care and observation for from four to six months. The care was constant. Tests of many kinds were given nearly every day. Some of the men [Seventh-day Adventists] reacted mildly, others ran high fevers, and others had no reaction.
ibid., Don A. Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, “Operation Whitecoat, Part 2,” November 8, 1963.

“For the next week we were examined several times and given blood tests every four hours,” Cesar Vega recalled. “From the monkey incident, which was on a Wednesday, until Thursday of the next week I felt normal, that is except for the darn needles.” (*ibid.*, Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989).

“That Thursday afternoon I came down with a fever, *a fever like I had never experienced in my life*,” Vega wrote. “I felt dizzy and had to go to bed. My temperature went up to a hundred and four degrees. Everything went black and I was unconscious until Saturday evening.” (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89, emphasis supplied).

“When I awoke I felt terrible and discovered that they had covered my whole body with ice to bring the fever down,” Vega stated. “They kept me covered with ice all that night and part of the next day.” (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 10/12/89).

“My fever finally subsided and I felt better,” Vega concluded. “I was sick for the next three weeks,

“I was ill with a high fever for a few days, 105 degrees I believe, from an experiment,” Wilson Wynn wrote. (Wilson Wynn, *Letter* to the author, dated at Hendersonville, North Carolina, October 12, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“Although I recovered myself, *many volunteers were very sick*,” Thomas Kopco recalled thirty-six years later. “We had to pass by their rooms very quietly *because the slightest noise would drive them crazy*.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89, emphasis supplied).

“I was in Whitecoat, but never went ` on project,” Michael Scofield wrote. “Before, and since, *I have heard of problems with projects, and know one individual* (whom I have not seen now for several years) *who claimed to be suffering long-term effects from the treatment he received*.” (Michael Scofield, *Letter*, dated, October 14, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“While Ben [Garcia] was in Germany during his tour of duty he heard reports of the dangers of the Whitecoat experiments,” Cesar Vega wrote. “He had also heard about participants who had not recovered fully from the experiments conducted by Whitecoat.” (Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 12, 1989

“No one really knows how many Seventh-day Adventist servicemen have died from aftereffects of the experiments conducted by Project Whitecoat,” Thomas Kopco stated. (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89).

[Note:– The Pentagon, United States Army, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church are not revealing any information on individual experiments of Project Whitecoat. The National Service Organization of the General Conference states that the Whitecoat Project itself was and is “Classified” and sealed. (See below). The Pentagon states that the Whitecoat Project itself is not Classified or sealed, but that the individual records of the experiment are “Classified” and therefore sealed. See below, *Letter*; Thomas A. Foley, Speaker of the House, United States Congress, Washington State.]

“*We were ordered not to say anything for 10 years*,” Thomas Kopco stated. “After the ten years were up, our Seventh-day Adventist youth magazine, *The Youth’s Instructor*, interviewed me about my

experiences at Camp Dugway in 1955.” (*ibid.*, Kopco, *Document Statement*, 10/10/89, emphasis supplied).

In 1957 I received a letter from a widow of one of the soldiers who had died during the experiments of Project Whitecoat. She told me another soldier had died as well. She said his last name was Long. She said that she wanted a list of all the men who served on the project with her husband because the Government was denying his death was service connected. Well, after you take the time to read the two articles from the *Newark News*, about nerve gas killing over 6,400 sheep near the experimental sight at Fort Dugway, Utah, you might believe that it was possible for two soldiers to die from a nerve gas experiment!

ibid., Thomas Kopco, *Document Statement*, signed, October 10, 1989. (emphasis supplied).

“Upon my return from mission service in Lebanon and Cyprus in 1952, I went several times to the then Mt. Etna Academy now known as Highland Academy,” Robert Mole stated. “There I became acquainted with a man and wife who were involved in the classified Chemical [and] Biological Warfare [CBW] experimentation involving Whitecoat.” (Robert L. Mole, DS, Chief, Chaplain Service, *Jerry L. Pettis MEMORIAL VETERANSHOSPITAL*, Department of Veterans Affairs, *Letter* to the author, dated at Loma Linda, California, November 2, 1989).

“I think he died of something contracted in these experiments,” Mole stated. “His widow eventually moved to California and remarried. Incidentally she is an excellent pianist. Her name (now) and address is _____.” (*ibid.*, Mole, *Letter*, 11/2/89, emphasis supplied).

“Although some individuals have felt that their ill health was due to participation in a research project, I know of only one that was certified by the Veterans Administration,” Colonel Dan Crozier, past Directory of Project Whitecoat admitted. “In this case the [U. S. Army] medical authorities were not at all sure that the individual’s illness was due to participation in the research program at USAMRIID, but they could not say beyond a doubt that it was not due to the illness he contracted while participating in a project.” (Colonel Dan Crozier, USA MC, Ret., Commanding Officer, USAMRIID [Project Whitecoat], *Letter*, to the author, dated at Frederick, Maryland, November 7, 1989, emphasis supplied).

This was the very scenario that took place between veterans of the “Gulf War” and the United States Army. The Army emphatically denied the allegations of veterans and insisted that Pentagon “authorities were not at all sure that the individual’s illness was due to participation” in the Gulf War.

“A close record was kept on each soldier, and every reaction was tallied,” Don Roth stated. “When each man was discharged from the hospital he had the right to choose a hospital where he preferred to be stationed for the duration of his service in the United States Army Medical Corps.” (*ibid.*, Roth, *The Youth’s Instructor*, 10/8/63).

After “his service in the United States Army” the Adventist young man was on his own. As in the recent “Gulf War” exposure to chemical substances, neither the United States Army, nor the Seventh-day Adventist Church would ever admit that the lingering effects of exposure to Q-Fever, Black Plague, and Tularemia vaccines were related to the Whitecoat experiments.

“Two weeks ago [October 9, 1989] my very best friend, a fellow Whitecoat participant, was cremated,” Cesar Vega wrote. “His name was Roy Rell. He participated in Whitecoat experiments during 1955.” (Cesar Vega, *Letter* to the author, dated at Riverside, California, October 23, 1989).

“When he came back to La Sierra after his tour of duty he was a sick man and he knew it,” Vega recalled. “He would get real sick every so often with a very high fever and developed small tumors in many parts of his body” (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 9/12/89).

“Finally after about two years he went to Norton [Air Force Base] to get some treatment, but was refused because they determined that his sickness was not service connected,” Vega concluded. “He was fifty-five when he died.” (*ibid.*, Vega, *Letter*, 9/12/89).

Is it merely a coincidence that the most famous Seventh-day Adventist hospital, Loma Linda Medical Center, is now in complete charge of the “Norton Air Force Base medical facility? Is it also a mere coincidence that this Adventist facility would not treat Roy Rell, the young Whitecoat volunteer?

“The closing of the Norton Air Force Base in the early 1990's turned into a great opportunity for Loma Linda,” so states the *SDA Encyclopedia*. “After negotiations the clinic located on the base was donated to Loma Linda, along with a lot of clinic equipment. The Social Action Community Health System (SACHS) is centered in the 42,300 square feet of clinic space.” (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, Second Revised Edition, Art. “Loma Linda University Hospital”).

“I heard that Frank Knight passed away a few years later, *after he went through this experiment*, which may have had a connection to the program,” G. R. Bietz wrote. “To the best of my knowledge he lived in Oregon.” (G. R. Bietz, Associate Director and Treasurer, Home Health Education Service, *Telephone Interview*, November 9, 1989, emphasis supplied).

“Frank Knight, *the man who passed away*, was in my group,” Bietz added further. (*ibid.*, Bietz, *Letter*, 10/31/89, emphasis supplied).

Project Whitecoat – Classified Or Not Classified

In a *Telephone Interview*, November 2, 1989, Elder Charles E. Bracebridge, Secretary of the National Service Organization, NSO, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, advised that I should forget researching Project Whitecoat, “because Project Whitecoat was Classified and sealed by an act of Congress.” In a *Letter* to the author, dated November 7, 1989, Colonel Dan Crozier had stated

that, “The field study itself is not classified *but the individual results are.*” In response to the statement by Elder Bracebridge, I wrote to Congressman Thomas S. Foley, at that time Speaker of the House of Representatives. Foley’s office forwarded a copy of the letter to the Department of the Army at the Pentagon. A reply was forwarded to this author dated December 1, 1989.

“According to our records, ‘Project Whitecoat,’ in and of itself, is neither classified nor has it been ‘sealed’ by an act of the Congress,” Richard Parry wrote. “What may explain Mr. Curtis’s inquiry is that the research projects, for which ‘Project Whitecoat’ provided volunteers, are classified.” (Richard B. Parry, Jr. Lieutenant Colonel, Medical Service Corps., Secretary of the General Staff, emphasis supplied).

“I think that Elder Bracebridge’s assertion that Whitecoat was “highly classified” is probably a smoke screen,” Michael Scofield wrote. “Yet, it is quite understandable that the General Conference would want to discourage you from continuing your investigation.” (Michael Scofield, *Letter* to the author, dated November 28, 1989).

Pioneer Adventist Position On Military Service

Adventists acknowledge the justice of rendering tribute, custom, honor, and reverence to the civil power, as enjoined in the New Testament. While we thus cheerfully render to Caesar the things which the Scriptures show to be his, we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed, as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind.

General Conference Committee, *Resolution*, General Conference Session, 1865. (emphasis supplied). (See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, National Service Organization, *Why Seventh-day Adventists Are Noncombatants*, Washington D.C. 1943, page 3).

“Even during World War I, with its nationalistic excesses, official statements by the [SDA] Church did not say specifically that Adventists were willing to serve in the army,” Martin Turner wrote. “No doubt many did, but a 1917 statement reaffirmed the 1865 declaration and requested that ‘we be required to serve our country only in such a capacity as will not violate our conscientious obedience to the law of God as contained in the Decalogue, interpreted in the teachings of Christ, and exemplified in His life.” (Martin D. Turner, “Project Whitecoat,” *Spectrum*, Summer, 1970; *op sit.*, *Why Seventh-day Adventists Are Noncombatants*, Washington D.C. 1943, page 3, emphasis supplied).

Contemporary Adventist Position On Military Service

“A two-page definition of noncombatancy given in a statement authorized in 1940 makes it plain that ‘noncombatancy is not pacifism,’” Martin Turner wrote. “It ‘is not conscientious objection to war service,’ and therefore the ‘Christian noncombatant will not refuse to participate in the military establishment.’” (*ibid.*, Turner, *Spectrum*, Summer, 1970; *op sit.*, *Why Seventh-day Adventists Are Noncombatants*, 1943, page 3).

“Current church literature still quotes the 1865 statement, apparently oblivious to the contradiction between it and the present position,” Martin Turner concluded. “It would seem that the best method of resolving the inconsistency would be to re-revise the definition of noncombatancy to conform to the original usage, and to initiate in the churches an active program of education that emphasizes ‘the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind,’ and that makes it clear why these are inconsistent with ‘all participation in acts of war and bloodshed.’” (*ibid.*, Turner, *Spectrum*, Summer, 1970).

“Whether this is done or not, it should be clear that we can no longer have it both ways,” Turner stated further. “A narrowly defined morality that claims to object to ‘the spirit and practice of war’ but that does not believe in ‘conscientious objection to war service’ will no longer suffice.” (*ibid.*, Turner, *Spectrum*, Summer, 1970).

Conclusions Of A Whitecoat Volunteer

“With regard to Elder Bracebridge’s comments about the church’s position [on bearing weapons], I believe you quote him correctly, and that is a correct reflection of the official posture of the denomination with regard to members entering the military service,” Scofield stated. “*The denomination will allow a variety of personal positions, and supports them all.* Does that surprise you?” (*ibid.*, Scofield, *Letter*, 11/28/89, emphasis supplied).

“I know several Adventist church members who are police officers,” Scofield added further. “*They definitely carry weapons.* Are they to be disfellowshipped? *One is a deacon.*” (*ibid.*, Scofield, *Letter*, 11/28/89, emphasis supplied).

Was the police officer converted to Seventh-day Adventism, or was the Seventh-day Adventist converted to the police force? Many people who are converted to the Seventh-day Adventist message do indeed give up their former occupation. For example, a night club performer must give up his activity to become a true Adventist. Do we accept all professions into the Church, like the Church of Rome did during the time of the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century? In this case, Elder C. E. Bracebridge, Secretary of the National Service Organization of the SDA Church, had stated that “the commandment that states ‘thou shalt not kill’ does not apply to service to government. It only means thou shalt not murder.”

The Purpose Of Historical Whitecoat Research

Who cares about the experiments of Project Whitecoat today? The project ended with the draft over twenty years ago. Should we worry about new germ warfare experiments in the future that might use young Seventh-day Adventist boys as human guinea pigs?

“What if even 10 or 20 men died because of the experiments? What does one do with that kind of information?” Scofield asked. “*There are an awful lot of people in the Adventist Church who would not believe you.*” (*ibid.*, Scofield, Letter, 11/28/89, emphasis supplied).

“Others would nod their heads, ‘hear’ what you tell them,” Scofield added further, “*but conveniently forget it because it upsets them and because it undermines the myth they cling to that the Adventist church can do no wrong.*” (*ibid.*, Scofield, Letter, 11/28/89, emphasis supplied).

In response to the above statement by Scofield, I would like to quote from a Whitecoat volunteer:

My next reaction to your letter was: This thing is very dirty – I don’t want to get involved. But I realize that I have had my head buried in the sand for too long now.

Thank you for the eye opening. I am now offering any assistance I can to your research.
Cesar Vega, Letter to the author, dated at La Sierra, California, October 23, 1989.

“Well, I hope I don’t sound too bitter. I am not,” Vega added further. “I just hope I can keep up with the things that are happening in the Church these days. I hope I do not make the same mistake of being an ostrich with my head buried in the sand.” (*ibid.*, Vega, Letter, 10/23/89).

“Do you expect current Church leadership to issue any type of apology?” Scofield asked. “I seriously doubt if they would. For several reasons. And even if they did print an apology in small print buried deep inside the *Adventist Review*, *I don’t think there would be a collective learning from past mistakes.*” (*ibid.*, Scofield, Letter, 11/28/89, emphasis supplied).

Personal Observations On Bearing Arms

The theme for the 1989 Project Whitecoat reunion was, “For God and Country – *for the Army and the Church.*” (See program paper; “Whitecoat Reunion,” Fredrick, Maryland Seventh-day Adventist Church [1989]. See also: *North Pacific Union Gleaner*, “Whitecoat Reunion,” June 19, 1989, emphasis supplied).

To the true Christian the Church and the State are forever separate. There is no way government projects can be introduced into the Church and make them harmonize with Christian doctrine and principles. For example, there is no way a true Christian can harmonize Rock and Roll music with Christian music. There is no such thing as “Christian Rock and Roll.” The phrase “Rock and Roll” came from the counter-culture life style of the 1960's and referred to sexual intercourse. The phrase “Christian Rock and Roll” would then mean, “Christian sexual intercourse music.” That, of course, would be totally unacceptable to any true Christian.

The phrase: “For God and Country – for the Army and the Church” is also unacceptable to a true Christian. There is no way a secular Army can be integrated into God’s remnant Church. The

Christian soldier is a soldier of the cross. A secular soldier is a soldier of an earthly government. A true Christian cannot espouse the Army to the Church. This is a Roman Catholic principle of the Dark Ages.

On March 5, 1991, a letter arrived enclosed in the official Veterans Administration envelope. The letter was from Robert L. Mole, D. Minister, of the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital, Loma Linda, California. The purpose of the letter was to gather information from Whitecoat volunteers for the possible publication of a book on Project Whitecoat. The letter stated: (1) "It's time the story be told positively,," and (2) "The General Conference through the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Board has approved this research and the publication of findings."

The letter stated further that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which "permitted, allowed, or encouraged participation" in Project Whitecoat, (3) "should be vindicated," and that the book would, (4) "Set the record straight once and for all."

The letter also stated that the book theme would, (5) "Form an educated basis for such future medical research projects," and (6), correct the illusion that, "Far too many people believe the [Whitecoat] studies were secret and most likely evil in purpose."

With these six points as a basis for the research, the General Conference, through the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Board, has approved the research and publication of a "positive" history of the Whitecoat experiments.

The mind-set is to "vindicate" the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "permission, allowance, or encouraged participation" in Project Whitecoat.