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**Plum Island, Lyme Disease  
And Operation Paperclip -  
A Deadly Triangle**

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**Plum Island, Lyme Disease and the Erich Traub File**

***<http://rense.com/general67/plumislandlyme.htm>***

Dedicated to the study of animal diseases, Plum Island appears to have been the site of experiments with disease-infected ticks conducted by Nazi scientists brought into the United States under Project Paperclip after WWII. One of the Nazi scientists who appears to have been involved with Plum Island was Dr. Erich Traub, who was in charge of the Third Reich's virological and bacteriological warfare program during World War II. **Was Traub involved with experiments that led to the spread of Lyme Disease?**

1. In order to understand how Erich Traub came to the United States, it is important to understand Project PAPERCLIP. The program begins with a synoptic account of that project and how its prosecution led to Traub's entry to the United States and his involvement with Plum Island: "Nearing the end of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union raced to recruit German scientists for postwar purposes. Under a top-secret program code-named Project PAPERCLIP, the U.S. military pursued Nazi scientific talent 'like forbidden fruit,' bringing them to America under employment contracts and offering them full U.S. citizenship. The recruits were supposed to be nominal participants in Nazi activities. But the zealous military recruited more than two thousand scientists, many of whom had dark Nazi party pasts." (Lab 257: the Disturbing Story of the Government's Secret Plum Island Germ Laboratory; by Michael Christopher Carroll; Copyright 2004 by Michael Christopher Carroll.

2. "American scientists viewed these Germans as peers, and quickly forgot they were on opposite sides of a ghastly global war in which millions perished. Fearing brutal retaliation from the Soviets for the Nazis' vicious treatment of them, some scientists cooperated with the Americans to earn amnesty. Others played the two nations off each other to get the best financial deal in exchange for their services. Dr. Erich Traub was troubling on the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain after the war, and ordered to research germ warfare viruses for the Russians. He pulled off a daring escape with his family to West Berlin in 1949. Applying for Project Paperclip employment, Traub affirmed he wanted to 'do scientific work in the U.S.A., become an American citizen, and be protected from Russian reprisals.

3. The program sets forth Traub's work for the Third Reich: "As lab chief of Insel Riems-a secret Nazi biological warfare laboratory on a crescent-shaped island nestled in the Baltic Sea-Traub worked directly for Adolf Hitler's second-in-charge, SS Reichsfuehrer Heinrich Himmler, on live germ trials.

4. Traub had studied in the United States before the war (at the Rockefeller Institute) and had been involved in Nazi activities inside the U.S. prior to 1939 (the outbreak of World War II). Traub also listed his 1930's membership in Amerika-Deutscher Volksbund, a German-American 'club' also known as Camp Sigfried. Just thirty miles west of Plum Island in Yaphank, Long Island, Camp Sigfried was the national headquarters of the American Nazi movement. . . . Ironically, Traub spent the prewar period of his scientific career on a fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute in Princeton, New Jersey, perfecting his skills in viruses and bacteria under the tutelage of American experts before returning to Nazi Germany on the eve of war. Despite Traub's troubling war record, the U.S. Navy recruited him for its scientific designs, and stationed him at the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland.

5. Nominally under the jurisdiction of the USDA (Department of Agriculture), Plum Island was also used for military biological warfare research on animal diseases. In that regard, it was involved with Fort Detrick, the Army's top chemical and biological warfare facility. Note that Traub was at the foundation of the Plum Island/biological warfare nexus. "Just months into his PAPERCLIP contract, the germ warriors of Fort Detrick, the Army's biological warfare headquarters, in Frederick, Maryland, and CIA operatives invited Traub in for a talk, later reported in a declassified top-secret summary: Dr. Traub is a noted authority on viruses and diseases in Germany and Europe. This interrogation revealed much information of value to the animal disease program from a Biological Warfare point of view. Dr. Traub discussed work done at a German animal disease station during World War II and subsequent to the war when the station was under Russian control.' Traub's detailed explanation of the secret operation on Insel Riems, and his activities there during the war and for the Soviets, laid the ground work for Fort Detrick's offshore germ warfare animal diseased lab on Plum

Island. Traub was a founding father.

6. It is interesting to note that the Third Reich's biological warfare program had the cover name of "Cancer Research Program. If we look at the National Cancer Institute's Special Viral Cancer Research Program and the evidence suggesting that the project was actually a front for the continuation of biological warfare research. Erich Traub appears to have been involved with the projects related to the SVCRP. Everybody seemed willing to forget about Erich Traub's dirty past-that he played a crucial role in the Nazis' 'Cancer Research Program,' the cover name for their biological warfare program, and that he worked directly under SS Reichsfuhrer Heinrich Himmler. They seemed willing to overlook that Traub in the 1930's faithfully attended Camp Sigfried. In fact, the USDA liked him so much, it glossed over his dubious past and offered him the top scientist job at the new Plum Island Laboratory-not once, but twice. Just months after the 1952 public hearings on selecting Plum Island, Doc Shahan dialed Dr. Traub at the naval laboratory to discuss plans for establishing the germ laboratory and a position on Plum Island.

7. More about how Traub came to be in a significant position at Plum Island. "Six years later-and only two years after Traub squirmed in his seat at the Plum Island dedication ceremonies-senior scientist Dr. Jacob Traum retired. The USDA needed someone of 'outstanding caliber, with a long established reputation, internationally as well as nationally,' to fill Dr. Traum's shoes. But somehow it couldn't find a suitable American. 'As a last resort it is now proposed that a foreigner be employed.' The aggies' choice? Erich Traub, who was in their view 'the most desirable candidate from any source.' The 1958 secret USDA memorandum 'Justification for Employment of Dr. Erich Traub' conveniently omitted his World War II activities; but it did emphasize that 'his originality, scientific abilities, and general competence as an investigator' were developed at the Rockefeller Institute in New Jersey in the 1930's.

8. The push to employ Traub as the director of Plum Island involved professional recommendations that omitted his work for the Third Reich: "The letters supporting Traub to lead Plum Island came in from fellow Plum Island founders. 'I hope that every effort will be made to get him. He has had long and productive experience in both prewar and postwar Germany,' said Dr. William Hagan, dean of the Cornell University veterinary school, carefully dispensing with his wartime activities. The final word came from his dear American friend and old Rockefeller Institute boss Dr. Richard Shope, who described Traub as 'careful, skill, productive and very original' and 'one of this world's most outstanding virologists.' Shope's sole reference to Traub at war: 'During the war he was in Germany serving in the German Army.

9. Traub declined the offer to lead the lab. There is considerable evidence that he was involved with biological warfare research at Plum Island. "Declining the USDA's offer, Traub continued his directorship of the Tubingen laboratory in West Germany, though he visited Plum Island frequently. In 1960, he was forced to resign as Tubingen's director under a dark cloud of financial embezzlement. Traub continued sporadic lab research for another three years, and then left Tubingen for good--a scandalous end to a checkered career. In the late 1970's, the esteemed virologist Dr. Robert Shope, on business in Munich, paid his father Richard's old Rockefeller Institute disciple a visit. The germ warrior had been in early retirement for about a decade by then. On May 18, 1985, the Nazis' virus warrior Dr. Erich Traub died unexpectedly in his sleep in West Germany. He was seventy-eight years old.

10. "A biological warfare mercenary who worked under three flags-Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States-Traub was never investigated for war crimes. He escaped any inquiry into his wartime past. The full extent of his sordid endeavors went with him to his grave. While America brought a handful of Nazi war criminals to justice, it safeguarded many others in exchange for verses to the new state religion-modern science and espionage. Records detailing a fraction of Eric Traub's activities are now available to the public, but most are withheld by Army intelligence and the CIA on grounds of national security. But there's enough of a glimpse to draw quite a sketch.

11. An important chapter in the story of how the inquiry into the possible link between Plum Island, Erich Traub's work on behalf of the US and the spread of Lyme Disease concerns the work of former Justice Department prosecutor John Loftus. In his book *The Belarus Secret*, Loftus referred to work done on Plum Island in the early 1950's in which Nazi scientists were experimenting on diseased ticks. Might that have referred to Traub? . Attorney John Loftus was hired in 1979 by the Office of Special Investigations, a unit set up by the Justice Department to expose Nazi war crimes and unearth Nazis hiding in the United States. Given top-secret clearance to review files that had been sealed for thirty-five years, Loftus found a treasure trove of information on America's postwar Nazi recruiting. In 1982, publicly challenging the government's complacency with the wrongdoing, he told 60 minutes that top Nazi officers had been protected and harbored in America by the CIA and the State Department. 'They got the Emmy Award,' Loftus wrote. 'My family got the death threats.

12. "Old spies reached out to him after the publication of his book, *The Belarus Secret*, encouraged that he-unlike other authors-submitted his manuscript to the government, agreeing to censor portions to protect national security. The spooks gave him copies of secret documents and told him stories of clandestine operations. From these leads, Loftus ferreted out the dubious Nazi past of Austrian president and U.N. secretary general Kurt Waldheim. Loftus revealed that during World War II, Waldheim had been an officer in a German Army unit that committed atrocities in Yugoslavia. A disgraced Kurt

Waldheim faded from the international scene soon thereafter.

13. "In the preface of *The Belarus Secret*, Loftus laid out a striking piece of information gleaned from his spy network: 'Even more disturbing are the records of the Nazi germ warfare scientists who came to America. They experimented with poison ticks dropped from planes to spread rare diseases. I have received some information suggesting that the U.S. tested some of these poison ticks on the Plum Island artillery range off the coast of Connecticut during the early 1950's. . . .Most of the germ warfare records have been shredded, but there is a top secret U.S. document confirming that 'clandestine attacks on crops and animals' took place at this time.

14. More pieces of evidence on the tantalizing trail of evidence pointing to a possible Plum Island/Traub/Lyme disease link: "Erich Traub had been working for the American biological warfare program from his 1949 Soviet escape until 1953. We know he consulted with Fort Detrick scientists and CIA operatives; that he worked for the USDA for a brief stint; and that he spoke regularly with Plum Island director Doc Shahan in 1952. Traub can be physically placed on Plum Island at least three times-on dedication day in 1956 and two visits, once in 1957 and again in the spring of 1958. Shahan, who enforced an ultrastrict policy against outside visitors, each time received special clearance from the State Department to allow Traub on Plum Island soil.

15. If in fact Traub was involved with research on Plum Island, this development would have been consistent with programs being conducted at that time involving experimentation on unwitting American citizens with biological and chemical warfare research agents: "Research unearthed three USDA files from the vault of the National Archives-two were labeled TICK RESEARCH and a third E.TRAUB. All three folders were empty. The caked-on dust confirms the file boxes hadn't been open since the moment before they were taped shut in the 1950's. Preposterous as it sounds, clandestine outdoor germ warfare trials were almost routine during this period. In 1952, the Joint Chiefs of Staff called for a 'vigorous, well-planned, large-scale [biological warfare] test to the secretary of defense later that year stated, 'Steps should be take to make certain of adequate facilities are available, including those at Fort Detrick, Dugway Proving Ground, Fort Terry (Plum Island) and an island field testing area.' Was Plum Island the island field testing area? Indeed, when the Army first scouted Plum Island for its Cold War designs, they charted wind speeds and direction and found that, much to their liking, the prevailing winds blew out to sea.

16. "One of the participating 'interested agencies' was the USDA, which admittedly set up large plots of land throughout the Midwest for airborne anticrop germ spray tests. Fort Detrick's Special Operations Division ran 'vulnerability tests' in which operatives walked around Washington, D.C., and San Francisco with suitcases holding *Serratia marcescens*-a bacteria recommended to Fort Detrick by Traub's nominal supervisor, Nazi germ czar and Nuremberg defendant Dr. Kurt Blome. Tiny perforations allowed the germs' release so they could trace the flow of the germs through airports and bus terminals. Shortly thereafter, eleven elderly men and women checked into hospitals with never-before-seen *Serratia marcescens* infections. One patient died. Decades later when the germ tests were disclosed, the Army denied responsibility. . . . In the summer of 1966, Special Operations men walked into three New York City subway stations and tossed lightbulbs filled *Bacillus subtilis*, a benign bacteria, onto the tracks. The subway trains pushed the germs through the entire system and theoretically killed over a million passengers.

17. "Tests were also run with live, virulent, anti-animal germ agents. Two hog-cholera bombs were exploded at an altitude of 1,500 feet over pigpens set up at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. And turkey feathers laced with Newcastle disease virus were dropped on animals grazing on a University of Wisconsin farm.

18. "The Army never fully withdrew its germ warfare efforts against food animals. Two years after the Army gave Plum Island to the USDA-and three years after it told President Eisenhower it had ended all biological warfare against food animals-the Joint Chiefs advised that 'research on anti-animal agent-munition combinations should' continue, as well as 'field testing of anti-food agent munition combinations. . . .' In November 1957, military intelligence examined the elimination of the food supply of the Sino-Soviet Bloc, right down to the calories required for victory: 'In order to have a crippling effect on the economy of the USSR, the food and animal crop resources of the USSR would have to be damaged within a single growing season to the extent necessary to reduce the present average daily caloric intake from 2,800 calories to 1,400 calories; i.e., the starvation level. Reduction of food resources to this level, if maintained for twelve months, would produce 20 percent fatalities, and would decrease manual labor performance by 95 percent and clerical and light labor performance by 80 percent.' At least six outdoor stockyard tests occurred in 1964-65. Simulants were sprayed into stockyards in Fort Worth, Kansas City, St. Paul, Sioux Falls, and Omaha in tests determining how much foot-and-mouth disease virus would be required to destroy the food supply.

19. "Had the Army commandeered Plum Island for an outdoor trial? Maybe the USDA lent a hand with the trial, as it had done out west by furnishing the large test fields. After all, the Plum Island agreement between the Army and the USDA allowed the Army to borrow the island from the USDA when necessary and in the national interest.

20. A former employee at Plum Island in the 1950's has personal recollection of a "Nazi scientist" releasing ticks outdoors

on Plum Island. "Traub might have monitored the tests. A source who worked on Plum Island in the 1950's recalls that animal handlers and a scientist released ticks outdoors on the island. 'They called him the Nazi scientist, when they came in, in 1951-they were inoculating these ticks,' and a picture he once saw 'shows the animal handler pointing to the area on Plum where they released the ticks.' Dr. Traub's World War II handiwork consisted of aerial virus sprays developed on Insel Riems and tested over occupied Russia, and of field work for Heinrich Himmler in Turkey. Indeed, his colleagues conducted bug trials by dropping live beetles from planes. An outdoor tick trial would have been de rigeur for Erich Traub.

21. Next, the program sets forth the case of Steve Nostrum-an early Lyme Disease victim whose reading of Loftus' book spurred him to begin inquiring about the Plum Island/Traub connection. "Somebody gave Steve Nostrum a copy of John Loftus's *The Belarus Secret* at one of his support group meetings. Steve had long suspected that Plum Island played a role in the evolution of Lyme disease, given the nature of its business and its proximity to Old Lyme, Connecticut. But he never publicly voiced the hunch, fearing a loss of credibility; hard facts and statistics earned him a reputation as a leader in the Lyme disease field. Now in his hands, he had a book written by a Justice Department attorney who not only had appeared on *60 Minutes* but also had brought down the secretary general of the United Nations. Nostrum disclosed the possible Plum-Lyme connection on his own television show. He invited local news reporter and Plum Island ombudsman Karl Grossman to help him explore the possibilities in light of the island's biological mishaps. Asked why he wrote about Loftus's book in his weekly newspaper column, Grossman says, 'To let the theory rise or fall. To let the public consider it. And it seemed to me that the author was a Nazi hunter and a reputable attorney-this was not trivial information provided [and it was provided] by some reliable person.'

22. "In October 1995, Nostrum, fresh off nursing duty (having earned an RN degree to help Lyme disease patients), rushed to a rare public meeting held by the USDA. In a white nurse's coat, stethoscope still around his neck, Nostrum rose. Trembling, his blond beard now streaked with gray, he clutched his copy of *The Belarus Secret* as he read the damning passage out loud for the USDA and the public to hear. 'I don't know whether this is true,' he said, looking at the dais. 'If it is true, there must be an investigation-if it's not true, then John Loftus needs to be prosecuted.' People in the audience clapped, and some were astonished. A few gawked, thinking he was nuts. How did the official USDA officials react? 'If stares could kill, I would have been dead,' remembers Nostrum.

23. "Hiding behind the same aloof veil of secrecy they had employed for decades, the USDA brazenly cut him off. 'There are those who think that little green men are hiding out there,' the officials responded to Nostrum. 'But trust us when we say there are no space aliens and no five-legged cows.' A few laughs erupted in the crowd. 'It did nothing but detract from what I was saying,' says Nostrum. 'But I said it, and I had the documentation to support it.'

24. The author speculates about the deer and birds that visited Plum Island, and the possibility that some of the infected ticks may well have traveled to the mainland from the island on those vectors. (Carroll explains that white-tailed deer regularly swim the two miles to the island to forage and migrating birds stop on Plum Island on their way North and South during their annual migrations.) ". . . If Dr. Traub continued his outdoor germ experiments with the Army and experimented with ticks outdoors, the ticks would have made contact with mice, deer, and more than 140 species of wild birds known to frequent and nest on Plum Island. The birds spread their toxic cargo to resting and nesting perches atop the great elms and oaks of Old Lyme and elsewhere, just like they spread the West Nile virus throughout the United States.

25. After noting that allegations of the discovery of Bb (the bacterium that causes Lyme Disease) in the late 1940's coincides with Traub's arrival on the island, the broadcast sets forth the denials by a USDA spokesperson that there was any BW/Traub/Plum Island link to the spread of the Lyme infection. Note that *Scientific American* dismissed the possibility of a "Nazi scientist" link to Plum Island. In FTR#240-part of the long FTR series about "German Corporate Control over American Media"--it was noted that the Von Holtzbrinck firm controls that magazine. Like its larger competitor Bertelsmann, the Von Holtzbrinck firm is rooted firmly in the Third Reich. In FTR#226, we examined the Nazi heritage of Von Holtzbrinck and the possibility that they may employed the notorious SS officer and Goebbels protégé Werner Naumann. The possibility that the Von Holtzbrinck/*Scientific American* link may have had something to do with the magazine's casual dismissal of the Traub/Plum/Lyme link is not one to be too readily dismissed. "Researchers trying to prove that Lyme disease existed before 1975 claim to have isolated Bb [the bacterium that causes the infection] in ticks collected on nearby Shelter Island and Long Island in the late 1940's. That timing coincides with both Erich Traub's arrival in the United States on Project PAPERCLIP and the Army's selection of Plum Island as its offshore biological warfare laboratory. The USDA's spokesperson, Sandy Miller Hays, is unconvinced about the possibility of a link between Lyme disease and Plum Island: . . . A PR expert, Hays had *Scientific American* eating out of her hand in June 2000, when they reported her as saying, 'We still get asked about the Nazi scientists,' . . . [with] the slightest trace of weariness creeping into her voice.' In their feature story on Plum Island, the prestigious magazine dubbed the intrigue surrounding the island as a 'fanciful fictional tapestry.'

26. The program concludes with examination of Plum Island's work with the "Lone Star Tick"-native to Texas. The focal

point of experimentation on Plum Island in the 1970's, the Lone Star tick-like Lyme Disease--is now spread throughout New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. How did that happen? " . . . The lab chief [Dr. Charles Mebus] failed to mention that Plum Island also worked on 'hard ticks,' a crucial distinction. A long overlooked document, obtained from the files of an investigation by the office of former Long Island Congressman Thomas Downey, sheds new light on the second, more damning connection to Lyme disease. A USDA 1978 internal research document titled 'African Swine Fever' notes that in 1975 and 1976, contemporaneous with the strange outbreak in Old Lyme, Connecticut, 'the adult and nymphal stages of *Abylomma americanum* and *Abylomma cajunense* were found to be incapable of harboring and transmitting African swine fever virus.' In laymen's terms, Plum Island was experimenting with the Lone Star tick and the Cayenne tick--feeding them on viruses and testing them on pigs--during the ground zero year of Lyme disease. They did not transmit African swine fever to pigs, said the document, but they might have transmitted Bb to researchers or to the island's vectors. The Lone Star tick, named after the white star on the back of the female, is a hard tick; along with its cousin, the deer tick, it is a culprit in the spread of Lyme disease. Interestingly, at that time, the Lone Star tick's habitat was confined to Texas. Today, however, it is endemic throughout New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. And no one can really explain how it migrated all the way from Texas.

<http://www.spitfirelist.com/f480.html>