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SUBJECT: Chronological Relationship with Dr. Frank R. Olson

I first met Dr. Frank R. Olson at Camp Detrick during the month of May 1943 at which time he was a commissioned officer in the Army, assigned to the classified research project at this station. During the period of May 1943 to May 1944 I was also assigned to this project as a commissioned officer. Dr. Olson's work during this time was mainly in the field of aerobiology and was assigned to another division. I was not in close contact, in the above period of time, with Dr. Olson either professionally or socially.

From May 1944 to September 1945 I was assigned to the Vigo Plant, Indiana Chemical Corps Installation, during which time I had no contact with Dr. Olson.

My next contact was made after my reassignment to Camp Detrick in October 1945. From October 1945 to September 1950, Dr. Olson was assigned to the Aerobiology Branch in the Physical Defense Division of the CMLC Biological Laboratories. In that capacity he was not closely associated with me professionally; however, we had numerous social contacts.

In September 1950 Dr. Olson joined the newly formed SO Division of which I was Chief. His first assignment to this Division was to take charge of the planning, training and intelligence activities. On October 1952 I was transferred from the SO Division to the Director's Office. From October 1952 to April 1953 Dr. Olson assumed my duties in the SO Division. In April 1953 Dr. Vedun, Safety Director of the CMLC Biological Laboratories, recommended that Dr. Olson be relieved of his duties as Chief of SO Division due to his health (ulcers). Lt Col DeCarlo was then appointed Chief of SO Division and Dr. Olson assumed the duties as Chief of Plans and Assessment Branch. He continued this assignment up to the date of his death.

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Dr. Olson was considered as an authority in the field of aerobiology, a science which was developed considerably during the years 1943 to 1953 at Camp Detrick. Both his superiors and subordinates regarded him as a highly qualified scientist in this field.

During the years I have known Dr. Olson I have had numerous social contacts with him and his family, visiting often at his home. He was always extremely cheerful, more than willing to help anyone in distress, often times making it a point to cheer not only his friends but others who were in a depressed mood. Dr. Olson enjoyed an occasional alcoholic drink but did not indulge excessively. His general state of mind and outlook on life was always that of extreme optimism. Never was there any indication of pessimism.

Dr. Olson could be classified as a family man, taking great interest in his home and the activities of his family. He imbedded in the minds of his children the need of religion in life, making sure that they attended their Sunday School regularly and would also encourage his friends' children to attend with them.

My last personal contact with Dr. Olson was on November 11, 1953, at which time he brought his children to visit and play with my children. At this time he appeared normal in all respects and as cheerful as ever.

I had no personal contacts with Dr. Olson after the experiment. I had first learned on Monday, November 23rd, 1953, from Lt. Col. Vincent Ruzet that Dr. Olson had been exposed and was showing symptoms of reaction.

On Tuesday, November 24th, I was notified that Dr. Olson was being taken to New York City for treatment.

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On Wednesday, November 25th, I was notified that condition was not serious and that recovery was expected.

On Thursday evening, November 26th, I was notified that Dr. Olson had returned to New York for further treatment.

On Friday, November 27th, I was notified that Dr. Olson was under treatment and that arrangements were being made for treatment at a private institution in this area. (Washington, D.C.-Frederick, Md.)

At approximately 3 a.m. on Saturday, November 28th, 1953, I was notified that Dr. Olson had leaped from the Statler Hotel.

At approximately 6 a.m. same date I received confirmation that the leap was fatal.

I HEREBY CERTIFY TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

W. L. L. Powell
Director, Biological Laboratories
Camp Detrick
Frederick, Maryland