

National

Group raps clandestine germ tests

WASHINGTON — A 1966 report to the U.S. Army's biological warfare laboratory, just released by the government, details what critics are calling the largest open-air germ warfare test yet to be disclosed.

Documents obtained by the Church of Scientology show a chemical used to simulate the dispersion of chemical or biological warfare agents was sprayed over a 10,000-square mile test area around Victoria, Texas, in 1965.

The 17 tests, conducted between July 11 and Aug. 9, involved the offshore release of zinc cadmium sulfide from two F-105 jet fighters. The chemical cloud was found to have been carried as far as 110 miles inland.

The Church of Scientology, which has culled evidence of numerous such tests from government records acquired under the Freedom of Information Act, said the Victoria experiment — like the others — was carried out without notice to local officials or the public.

It also said the test raises additional questions about the possible harmful effects of zinc cadmium sulfide, which the Army contends is safe but the church — citing the findings of a Canadian pharmacologist and a former Army scientist — calls a potential health hazard.

The report to the Army Biological Laboratories at Fort Detrick, Md., showed the Victoria test area was "between Corpus Christi and Freeport on the coast and bounded inland by San Antonio, Austin and Houston."

Sampling devices were placed on 270-foot towers on Matagorda island and outside Victoria and at 6 smaller sampling stations scattered over the test area.

The area of dispersion was far greater than that reported in a 1961 test, in which quantities of zinc cadmium sulfide were released into the air from a 1,400-ft television transmission tower near the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

In a letter to Sen. John Tower, Texas, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, spokesman Brian Anderson renewed the church's call for a ban on open-air testing.



Staff photo by Chuck Chapman

Bent out of shape

Senior Scott Parma thinks about the \$47.50 it will take to replace the bent front wheel of his bike. Parma is an electrical engineering major from Irving. He bent the wheel on a curb by Davis-Gary.

Creationists fight evolution

United Press International SACRAMENTO, Calif. — An eighth grader will testify on behalf of Bible fundamentalists who claim state public schools violate children's freedom of religion by teaching Darwin's theory of evolution as the only scientific explanation of life.

When testimony resumed today, prosecuting attorney Richard Turner was expected to call San Diego public school student Kasey Segrave, 13, as a witness. The boy's father, Kelly Segrave, is director of Creation Science Research Center, a Christian-oriented foundation that lodged the suit against the state.

The plaintiffs want Superior Court Judge Irving Perluss to order the state Board of Education to rewrite its science education guidelines, which now authorize only the theory of evolution in accounting for the origin and development of life.

"The Segrave kid isn't being taught evolution, he's being taught scientific concepts," Deputy Attorney General Robert Tyler told reporters after Monday's session, noting Kasey Segrave is an eighth grader. He said California students aren't introduced to evolution until the 10th grade.

"I don't want to cross-examine the boy," Tyler said. "They say he

was exposed to evolution. I just want specifics."

The two attorneys stipulated Kasey would be the only Segrave child to testify, although his brothers, Jason 12, and Kevin, 7, are named as co-plaintiffs in the suit.

In opening statements Monday at the non-jury trial expected to last a week, Turner steered clear of challenging evolution, but said there should be room for more than one theory of life's origin.

"This is not a monkey trial," he told Perluss.

"We are not trying to ban evolution. We seek protection for the right to believe in a cause. The real issue is religious freedom under the First Amendment of the Constitution."

Turner said Kasey and two other Segrave children were being told "their religious beliefs are wrong" in science classes where evolution was presented as a fact.

Tyler unsuccessfully sought to have the case dismissed on the grounds there was no infringement of constitutional rights. He said science takes a neutral position about religion and cited court decisions in other states where public schools were not required to present all possible theories in the teaching of science.

In denying Tyler's motion for dismissal, Perluss said religious freedom was a key provision of the Constitution. "I see no reason why we should not proceed," he added.

Tyler has enlisted author-astronomer Carl Sagan and other stars of American science to defend the state's way of teaching. If they actually testify, it won't be until later in the trial.

Turner began his presentation with a three-hour grilling of Robert L. Howe, program administrator for curriculum frame-

work for the state Department of Education.

Howe testified the free textbooks the state supplies public school students conform to guidelines set up by advisory committees and approved by the Board of Education. He said local school boards were free to buy other texts if they paid for them with local funds.

The trial attracted national interest because of its similarity to the celebrated trial 56 years ago of John Scopes, a Dayton, Tenn., high school teacher who was convicted and fined \$100 for teaching evolution in violation of state law.

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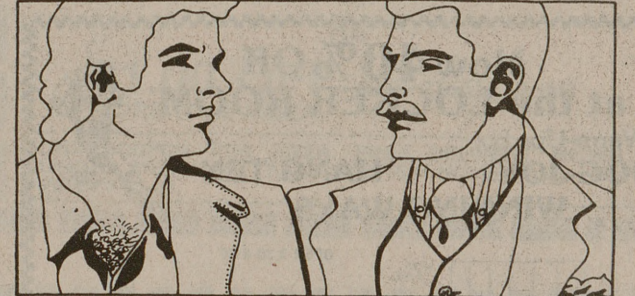
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