



**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Case No.: X97401-97-22

Case Agents: Special Agent Jillian Crowe  
Special Agent Carter M. Fawkes

Date: 2 November 1997

Los Angeles Bureau

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ABSTRACT

In response to an anonymous 911 call, Special Agents Crowe and Fawkes were assigned to investigate the death of Lieutenant Michael Carlisle, USN. Carlisle was discovered in his own bathtub, his right hand severed with a common household hacksaw. Despite some circumstantial indications of the presence of a second person in or around Carlisle's apartment on the night of his death, all forensic evidence indicates that he acted alone in severing his hand. Despite its gruesome aspects, his death must be ruled a suicide.

Carlisle was an agent of the Naval Intelligence Service, assigned to a classified investigation known as "Operation Deep Six." The charred remains of some documents tentatively identified as bearing D.O.D. insignia were found in the apartment, along with an empty plastic case which presumably contained a computer disk containing files related to the classified project. The whereabouts of the disk remain unknown, and until it is discovered there remains a concern for national security.

An obscure symbol was discovered on the wall of Carlisle's bathtub enclosure: forensic evidence indicated that it had been drawn by Carlisle with his own blood. A cross-check of the symbol revealed a connection to a previous FBI case file: X9233-93-5, written by Case Agent Christopher Neville. Information contained in that file enabled the current case agents to track and prevent the suicide of Dr. Martin Rivera. Rivera had ties to Operation Deep Six, and his fingerprints had been found on the empty disk case in the apartment. Rivera suffered self-inflicted neck wounds with a hacksaw, and is currently institutionalized. In addition to his physical injuries, he has been diagnosed with the psychiatric disorder dissociative schizophrenia, and is currently unable to provide the Bureau with additional details of his temporary disappearance.

Carlisle's death was self-inflicted, and additional deaths related to the case seem to have been prevented. Although there are still pending national security issues, due to its classified nature the case agents have and can be given no direct knowledge of Operation Deep Six, and therefore cannot provide a competent assessment of the potential danger posed by the missing disk. The case agents recommend that continued investigation into the whereabouts of the missing computer disk be handled by and at the discretion of Naval Intelligence, working in cooperation with the FBI as necessary.

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DETAILED REPORT

An anonymous 911 call was placed at 8:01 pm PST to LA emergency operators. As a result of the call and some extremely rapid inter- and intra-agency communication, Agents Crowe and Fawkes were dispatched by Assistant Director Gregory Purcell from the Long Beach Bureau office at 8:15 pm PST to 6315 Primrose Ave, Los Angeles.

Agents arrived at the scene at 8:57 pm PST. New York™ brand paramedic Stan Stevens was already at the scene, and evidence tape was already up. Entering the building, the agents met Lt. Richard MacNeil, USNIC, and Det. Anderson Mills, LA County Sheriff's Homicide. They had been there only a few minutes.

The clothed body of a Caucasian male was in the bathtub: floating in warm water and blood. The man's right forearm had been severed about one inch proximal of the styloid processes of the radius and ulna: his unattached right hand and wrist were found wedged against the wall of the bathtub by the weight of his right leg. His left hand (still attached) gripped a common household hacksaw. A symbol and some lettering had been drawn on the wall of the bathtub enclosure in blood. A manual search of the body revealed no identification, nor any additional injuries or identifying marks. The man seemed to be in his early to mid-thirties.

The apartment appeared relatively normal and undisturbed. Two glasses of red wine sat on the kitchen table: one of them showing evidence of use. Two coats hung from the chairs around the table.

On the stove in the kitchen was a cornflower blue enameled iron 3-quart saucepan containing the charred remains of approximately twenty sheets of paper. The pan and its contents were tagged as evidence. On the adjacent kitchen counter was an empty plastic case of the kind used to hold Zip™ computer disks. The case had a paper label bearing the handwritten legend "SORG Files." No sign of the disk was found.

The sliding glass door leading to the balcony of the apartment was found ajar. The adjoining balcony was only about six feet above the ground, but there was no direct evidence that the door had been used as an entry or exit point on that night.

There was a housecat present in the apartment: it seemed undisturbed by the events.

Paramedic Stan Stevens reported having seen a man leaving the neighborhood upon his arrival of the crime scene. The man was described as tall, dark-

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haired, and smoking a pipe. None of the investigative agents on the scene that night actually saw this man, but relied on the paramedic's report.

After completing the initial inspection of the crime scene, cards were exchanged among the personnel from different agencies. Paramedic Stan Stevens prepared the body for removal, while other physical evidence was prepared for analysis by the FBI forensic lab.

Herewith follows the initial forensics report of the FBI Lab, by Dr. Paul Langfield, Supervising Agent.

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FBI Forensic Report Re: 6315 Primrose

Suspect ID as Lt. Michael Carlisle, United States Navy

Dental and fingerprint verification

Apartment was leased to Michael A. Carlisle.

All information relating to Lt. Carlisle is rated CLASSIFIED by the United States Navy. A neighbor described Carlisle was a "G-Man for the Navy".

#### Autopsy Abstract

Victim died of asphyxia as a result of blood loss from right forearm.

Severance of right forearm and hand was caused by hacksaw (recovered)

Severance of arm was self-inflicted judging from angle of wound, and condition of the musculature of left arm. Only extreme duress could cause an individual to do this. It's remarkable that he could have finished without (a) losing consciousness due to blood loss or (b) losing consciousness due to pain.

Victim was right handed.

The coroner placed the time of death at approximately 8pm. As the death was relatively slow, it's difficult to give it precise timing.

#### Forensic Results

Wall writing was done by victim with left index finger using own blood.

We have top people looking for a match of the symbol.

Lettering appeared to be incomplete... possibly CTHONIC, CTHORNAI or CTHULHU looking contextual tie-in.

Found a tooth on body. Tooth is a lower right molar (wisdom tooth). The tooth was not removed from the victim (victim had that tooth still in place in jaw). The tooth was probably extracted by a dentist or oral surgeon. The tooth was probably extracted more than two years previously.

Hacksaw was new, of an inexpensive brand commonly available at home

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improvement stores.

The wine was a California burgundy, probably Napa valley, 1996. It had a robust aroma, a whisper of oak and hazelnut, and a gentle finish and could probably be bought at any local grocer for less than \$10.

The glass with less wine had prints belonging to the victim and FBI Agent Crowe. The only prints on the full glass belonged to Agent Crowe.

The burned papers appear to be 15-20 pages of US Letter 20# bond photocopier paper. We have detected traces of laser printer toner. We are reconstructing the entire contents of that document.

The plastic casing belongs to an Iomega Zip disk. The J card was labeled "SORG Files" with a Pilot #45 Rollerball pen, black. The victims' prints were on the card. There are other prints but we have not been able to find a match for them yet.

The photos show the deceased and family enjoying a hearty New England Thanksgiving supper.

The ground in the backyard is hardpacked dirt, grass and other vegetal matter. We cannot draw a conclusion if another party entered or exited the apartment via the balcony.

The 911 call was placed anonymously at 8:01 pm PST. The caller seemed to have a Slavic dialect. The call was not traced in time.

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To follow leads from the crime scene involved massive amounts of lab work and evidence analysis. The FBI crime lab and Supervising Agent Langfield are to be highly commended for their efficient and expert handling of this material, and their most expeditious reporting of results. The men and women of the lab are a credit to the Bureau and to forensic science.

Many pieces of hard forensic evidence pointed to suicide in Carlisle's death, and there is no doubt that he himself performed the action which led to his bloodletting. In many ways Carlisle fits the statistical predictions for a suicide. 1996 Figures from the National Institute of Mental Health reveal that suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for 1.4% of total deaths. Although women have the higher rate of attempted suicide, over 72% of all completed suicides are committed by white men, with the highest rates in men between the ages of 30 and 45. Ordinary suicide remained, however, an insufficient explanation. Carlisle

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was an officer in the United States Navy, and furthermore possessed a high security clearance. He was, by all accounts, a man with exceptionally strong will and fortitude, and had been subject to psychological and background checks. No suicidal tendencies were detected or suspected in him. Statistics aside, none of the commonly recognized risk factors for suicide were apparent in his particular situation.<sup>1</sup>

Arguing strongly against the suicide hypothesis was Carlisle's apparent choice of method. Suicide by firearms is the most common method for both men and women, accounting for 61% of all suicides. Data from the Actuarial Association of America indicate that fewer than .001 percent of suicide victims choose to sever a body part, and in such rare cases the deed is performed through a quick, guillotine-like action. There is no reported case of a person self-severing a limb in the slow and excruciatingly painful way that Carlisle did. Auto-asphyxiation from massive blood loss is a popular second suicide choice, but usually involves only the cutting of the veins in the wrist, not the outright severing of an entire limb. Following these two techniques, most suicides are performed by hanging, drug overdose, and impact trauma from high jumps or automobile crashes. Additionally, the presentation of the body was ritualistic, with the occult symbol drawn in blood on the bathroom wall.

Lt. Carlisle cut off his own hand, and he must have known that death was the most likely outcome of that action. Perhaps it was even a desirable outcome from his point of view. Nevertheless, the most reasonable conclusion from the evidence is that Carlisle was not attempting to kill himself, paradoxical as that may sound. Had his goal been suicide he would have chosen one of the many well-known simpler, quicker, and less painful tech-

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- <sup>1</sup> O'Connell M. Stress and the professional: some recent naval engagements. J R Soc Health 1991 Apr;111(2):64-6.
- Pitman RK. Self-mutilation in combat-related PTSD [letter]. Am J Psychiatry 1990 Jan;147(1):123-4.
- Pomerantz AS. Delayed onset of PTSD: delayed recognition or latent disorder? [letter]. Am J Psychiatry 1991 Nov;148(11):1609.
- Ramchandani D. Distinguishing features of delayed-onset post traumatic stress disorder. Bull Menninger Clin 1990 Spring;54(2):247-54.
- Hendin H, Haas AP. Suicide and guilt as manifestations of PTSD in Vietnam combat veterans. Am J Psychiatry 1991;148(5):586-91.
- Labbate LA, Snow MP. Post traumatic stress symptoms among soldiers exposed to combat in the Persian Gulf. Hosp Community Psychiatry 1992;43(8):831-3.
- McDougle CJ, Southwick SM. Emergence of an alternate personality in combat-related post traumatic stress disorder. Hosp Community Psychiatry 1990 May;41(5):554-6.
- Milroy R. Observations on stress reactions as seen in Naval Reserve Fleet Hospital training evolutions. Mil Med 1991;156(4):166-8.

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niques. He would not have used his last few seconds of consciousness to write an obscure occult symbol on the wall with his own blood. In cutting off his right hand, Lt. Carlisle was attempting to satisfy some other kind of compulsion, to achieve some goal apart from his own death. It was a goal for which he was willing to sacrifice his life. To determine the nature of that compulsion and that goal seemed a prime target of further investigation.<sup>2</sup>

Lt. Carlisle was engaged in classified work for the US Navy at the time of his death, and evidence relating to that work seemed to have been destroyed and/or stolen from his apartment. Assessing the potential threat to national security represented by the missing computer disk was also a high priority for continued inquiry. Tracking the reportedly Slavic but otherwise anonymous 911 caller who tipped authorities to Carlisle's death, questioning the man seen by Stan Stevens outside Carlisle's apartment, following the missing computer disk, and investigating the meaning of the strange blood symbol were all pursued simultaneously.

Assistant Director Purcell, after being updated on the case, gave approval for the case agents to cooperate with Lt. Richard MacNeil, NIC. Since Carlisle's work was classified, it was necessary to rely on MacNeil's privileged knowledge and share information as much as possible. MacNeil's time was in high demand: he was called away to lend support to a Naval operation in the Arctic during the course of the investigation. However, he was able to provide the following sketchy details.

- 1) The deceased Lt. Carlisle had been investigating a very secret naval abnormal event which occurred in the South Pacific.
- 2) He was diagnosed as having gone mentally unstable during the last few weeks prior to his death.

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<sup>2</sup> Adams-Silvan A, Silvan M. 'A dream is the fulfillment of a wish': Traumatic dream, repetition compulsion, and the pleasure principle. Int J Psychoanal 1990;71(3):513-22.

Baum A. Stress, intrusive imagery, and chronic distress. Health Psychol 1990;9(6):653-75.

Bisson JI. Automatism and post-traumatic stress disorder. Br J Psychiatry 1993 Dec;163:830-2.

Muran EM, Motta RW. Cognitive distortions and irrational beliefs in post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depressive disorders. J Clin Psychol 1993 Mar;49(2):166-76.

Wilcox J, Briones D, Suess L. Auditory hallucinations, post traumatic stress disorder, and ethnicity. Compr Psychiatry 1991;32(4):320-3.

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- 3) His work documents had disappeared .
- 4) There was a report/rumor of a Ukrainian spy known as "Igor," who was believed by some to be operating in the Los Angeles area. The NIC knows the Ukrainian government to have a motive to silence Lt. Carlisle about his investigation. This last point remains conjecture.

Despite the best efforts of top people in the FBI crime lab, the documents burned in the cornflower blue enameled saucepan on Carlisle's stove were beyond salvage. The recovered ZIP™ disk case, however, was traced to an organization called the Sonographic Ocean Resonance Group (SORG), a private research consortium working with decommissioned Cold War submarine surveillance cables under US Navy supervision. Fingerprints lifted from the disk were matched to those of a Dr. Martin Rivera, the Principal Investigator of the SORG project, whose prints were on file with his US Naval security clearance application.

Unfortunately, attempts to locate Dr. Rivera revealed that he had just recently been reported missing by members of his family.<sup>3</sup> Further investigation revealed that the local SORG offices had been precipitously vacated, apparently at the command of the US Navy. One other member of the SORG team, a Ph.D. candidate named Claudia Cowen, was identified. With the discovery of the outstanding Missing Persons Report filed on Dr. Martin Rivera, it was deemed of utmost priority to interview Ms. Cowen immediately for two reasons:

- 1) she was our only other known link to SORG, and
- 2) she might be in grave and imminent danger from whatever force or agents were behind the death of Carlisle and the disappearance of Rivera.

Acting on the confirmed identification from the FBI crime lab, Ms. Cowen's address was pulled from public telephone records. She lived at 712 S Santa Fe, Los Angeles.

Agents Crowe and Fawkes, assisted by LA Sheriff's Detective Mills, arrived at that address at approximately 9:05 PM PST on 22 October. The area was a primarily industrial section of East Los Angeles, virtually deserted. The building at 712 S Santa Fe was a red brick commercial building converted

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<sup>3</sup> LAPD case file 14738, Missing Persons Report, filed by Candi Perkins, sister of Dr. Martin Rivera, 17 October 1997.

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into residential lofts. Entry to the attached parking lot was obstructed by a nine-foot wrought iron fence and automatic gate. Parking on the street was not advisable due to the character of the neighborhood and its denizens.

A pipe-smoking man was observed on the sidewalk some twenty yards south of the parking lot entrance who fit the general description of the pipe-smoking man given at the scene of Carlisle's death. This man crossed to the west side of Santa Fe and began walking northward to the corner of 7th Street. The man was followed and interviewed near the corner of 7th and Santa Fe on the sidewalk. Agents identified themselves and questioned the man, but he claimed not to understand them, repeating only the phrase "no English" in a thickly Slavic dialect. A very cursory examination of the man's jacket pockets revealed a volume of Pushkin (written in English), and an electric garage door opener. The man was escorted back across the street to 712 Santa Fe, where it was discovered that his garage door opener operated the automatic gate into the parking lot. The agents moved their cars into the building's lot and closed the gate.

After attempts to explain the situation to the pipe-smoking man brought only additional repetitions of the phrase "no English," it was decided that he should be held until an interpreter could be summoned. The man was put into the custody of Detective Mills.

After speaking with Claudia Cowen and identifying themselves through the building's intercom system, the agents were given permission to enter the building and Ms. Cowen's apartment. Ms. Cowen was entertaining guests in her apartment: two females and one male. They were playing billiards. The agents took Ms. Cowen aside in the living room area of the apartment while Detective Mills stood by the pipe-smoking man.

Claudia Cowen is a Caucasian female in her mid-twenties. This agent was concerned that she would prove to have been influenced by the alleged cult forces at work, but this concern seemed to be unfounded: she appeared to be a thoroughly normal young woman. She is a Ph.D. candidate in oceanography who worked with Dr. Rivera and the Sonographic Ocean Resonance Group collecting data for her doctoral dissertation. She described SORG as a very small research consortium headed by Dr. Rivera, which used decommissioned Cold War naval equipment to collect underwater sounds, especially whale song. She said that she and Dr. Rivera constituted the entire local staff of the organization. She could not imagine any current military or security application for their work. She had not heard of Lt. Carlisle and had no knowledge of Operation Deep Six. She reported that in recent weeks Dr. Rivera had begun exhibiting odd behavior, and had spoken of a "support group" for his "calling." She further reported that on October 15, two men

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identifying themselves only as "from the Navy" appeared at the SORG offices and declared that the organization was being shut down, and that they had authority to repossess all US Naval equipment. Ms. Cowen reports that they removed everything from the SORG offices, including all furniture, fixtures, supplies, and all the data and files, including her own doctoral research. No additional explanations for the shutdown were given to her; Dr. Rivera was not present. Ms. Cowen reported that she had not seen or heard from Dr. Rivera since this incident, and had no idea where he might be located.

After some conversation, Ms. Cowen revealed that she had, in fact, made a backup copy of some of the research files on a Zip™ disk prior to this shutdown, when Dr. Rivera began acting strangely. With some persuasion she agreed to surrender this disk to the investigating agents. She was deeply concerned about losing the results of her years of doctoral study, and the agents promised to do what they could to restore her own work to her.

The backup disk was located in a storage area in the basement of the building, and once it was retrieved, the interview with Ms. Cowen was concluded. She was given the agents' numbers and asked to report any additional details she recalled which might be of help in the case.

Ms. Cowen said that she knew the pipe-smoking man as "Ivar," and said he did janitorial work around the building. Detective Mills took "Ivar" into custody, saying that he would contact a Russian interpreter and notify us when we could continue with questioning.

Due to an interagency snafu, the reasons for which remain unclear at this writing, no interpreter was summoned, and the pipe-smoking man was released from the custody of the LA County Jail at approximately 5:15 am PST on 23 October, on the grounds that he had not been appropriately Mirandized. No preemptive advisory of his release was provided to the case agents. Subsequent attempts to relocate the man proved fruitless.

Agent L. Stanton at the FBI imaging archives in New York identified a match for the symbol drawn by Carlisle in blood on the wall of the bathtub enclosure: an identical symbol was attached to a previous FBI report<sup>4</sup>. The report described a cult of people who believed themselves to be under the influence of "the Call," subject to auditory hallucinations directing them to perform acts of self-mutilation and even suicide. SA Neville had been

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<sup>4</sup> SA Neville, Christopher. FBI Case file X9233-93-5: "Cthulhu Cult". Filed with the Los Angeles Bureau office 23 November, 1993.

tracking a series of self-mutilations/suicides in Georgia which he believed were linked to this cult. He had identified a pattern involving twelve ritualistic self-dismemberments, timed to coincide with certain astrological events.<sup>5</sup> The symbol drawn by Lt. Carlisle in blood was linked to ritualistic efforts to break the grip of the compulsion felt by these cult members.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, attempts to locate SA Christopher Neville to discuss his report in greater detail revealed that he had been relieved of active FBI duty and had died as a result of a woodworking accident in September of 1994.

The appearance of the symbol on Carlisle's bathtub enclosure, and the discovery of a tooth on the body, coupled with the imminent arrival of astrological conditions identical to those described in Neville's report, suggested that a similar pattern of cult behavior might be at work in the death of Lt. Carlisle. If Carlisle believed himself to be under the influence of Cthulhu's "Call," he might have felt compelled to perform an act of self-mutilation. This may be what caused Carlisle to kill himself in the extraordinarily grisly and impractical fashion that he chose. The presence of the tooth and the symbol may indicate the enormous strength of will and character he possessed, even while in the grip of self-destructive compulsions. He may have been attempting to save his own life in the only way he believed possible.

If the regrettable events in Waco, Texas of 1993 can teach us anything, they can teach us that, ridiculous as we may find the beliefs of cult members, we cannot simply disregard them. We must strive to understand them, since cult members will act on their beliefs, no matter how nonsensical

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. "...A sacrificial cycle of individuals will occur during the lunar month preceding the Hallowmas. Each will follow the bidding of Cthulhu, giving up, quite literally, life and limb to appease the Great Old One and to hasten his return. The cycle culminates with the sacrifice of the twelfth victim who will take his own life two days prior to the Hallowmas. The 'Chosen One' will meet with other followers of Cthulhu, and in ritual circle the Chosen One will sever his or her own head as the ultimate self sacrifice to Cthulhu."

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. "...the Call can be broken, at least for such time as most swift action may be taken. It requires a special invocation of Cthulhu, performed before his sign. The sign being drawn, a tooth should be brought to touch it reminding the supplicant of the Great Old One's hunger for the flesh of man. This done, the invocation ... is thrice intonated, within the hearing of the He Who Doth Hear the Call. This done, the tooth shall become enriched with the strength to break grip of the Call."

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they may seem. That lesson was apparently not yet clear to SA Neville's superiors when they dismissed his report, filed just months after the Waco incident when the fallout still consumed the Bureau. There is no law enforcement agency better situated or equipped to deal with cult practices than the FBI, and we must remain open-minded if we hope to save lives and prevent future debacles like the Branch Davidian affair.

If there were cult activity behind Carlisle's death, the disappearance of Dr. Martin Rivera and his reported obsession with his "calling" suggested that he was somehow involved in it. If the pattern of twelve sacrificial victims mentioned in Neville's report applied here, then it seemed that Rivera's life might be in danger. In an attempt to determine the existence and extent of any such pattern, SA Fawkes issued a bulletin to all southern California law enforcement agencies, EMTs, and other crisis personnel requesting an advisory on any reported dismemberments or self-mutilation.<sup>7</sup> Of the several responses received, two clearly fit the profile.<sup>8,9</sup> One of the bodies had already been disposed of, and access to records concerning the other was obstructed by legal complications which are still being addressed. Although the extent of the pattern was not firmly established, there was enough information to suggest that the cult theory of the case had some merit and to warrant continued investigation.

SA Crowe worked with the backup disk provided by Claudia Cowen and discovered what appeared to be encrypted audio files. Agent Orange of the FBI computer labs was not optimistic about decrypting the files, but SA Crowe managed to contact a research colleague of Rivera's, Dr. Benjamin Baskin, at the University of Dublin in Ireland, who was also affiliated with SORG. Baskin was able to provide SA Crowe with unencrypted versions of the same audio files, which had been sent to him by Rivera. Although the sound recordings in the files had been initially tentatively identified as the song of blue whales, Dr. Baskin informed SA Crowe that he believed that identification to be incorrect.<sup>10</sup> His best guess was that they were noises of some other, heretofore unidentified, aquatic species. When agents Crowe and Fawkes listened to the files through a number of filters provided by Agent Orange of the FBI crime lab, they were able to isolate a noise which

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<sup>7</sup> SA Fawkes, Carter. Bulletin X0091-1-A. Transmitted 23 October, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Ritz, J. Orange County Psychiatric Center. Pers. com., 25 October, 1997.

<sup>9</sup> Officer Dillon, A. Santa Monica Police Department. Pers. com., 25 October, 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Baskin, Benjamin. University of Dublin. Pers. com., 28 October, 1997.

sounded very much like the type of chanting described in SA Neville's case report X9233-93-5. The possible source of such a noise remains unknown.

Dr. Baskin advised SA Crowe that another research colleague of Rivera's, Dr. Jerry Robbins, had been listening to the same audio files and had begun to exhibit strange behavior. He had apparently been recently prevented from cutting his own wrist with a butter knife, and Baskin feared he would be institutionalized.<sup>11</sup> It seemed possible that exposure to the SORG audio files was somehow linked to the auditory hallucinations apparently experienced by Carlisle and Rivera. The location of Dr. Rivera and of the missing Zip™ disk remained of paramount importance.

SA Crowe discovered a desktop utility on the backup disk provided by Claudia Cowen which featured a note apparently written by Rivera to himself: a reminder about a "Calling Group" which named a lifeguard station at Santa Monica beach and a time. Suspecting that the "calling group" may be an oblique reference to cult activity, it was decided that the agents should stake out the indicated lifeguard station commencing immediately. Lt. Richard MacNeil of USNIC had returned from his posting to the Arctic, and accompanied the agents on the stakeout.

Surveillance began at 6:30 pm PST on 26 October. Agents were equipped with a Bureau-issued night vision scope, a listening device, and a 40,000 candlepower searchlight. The beach was populated by numerous civilians, most of them apparently travelling to or from the nearby Santa Monica pier, where restaurants and amusements are located. There appeared to be a group of people sitting in a circle on the sand near the designated lifeguard tower. Ambient noise from the ocean prevented the successful remote deployment of the listening device, which lacked an appropriate parabolic microphone. The only way to determine the nature of the meeting would be to get closer. Alerting the general public to our surveillance was not desired. Accordingly, SA Crowe approached the group from the south along the beach footpath as though she were just another citizen out for a stroll, while SA Fawkes and Lt. MacNeil approached from the east, using what little cover of buildings, etc., was available to mask their presence.

SA Crowe, displaying considerable initiative, got close enough to the group to overhear their conversation. She determined that there was no immediate threat of violent action, and was, in fact, welcomed by the members of the group to join them. She did so, sitting in the circle. SA Fawkes and Lt. MacNeil, meanwhile, maintained a more discreet distance.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

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The group consisted of seven people: three men and four women, all Caucasian, ranging in age from 18 to early 40s. They did not seem surprised by SA Crowe's desire to join them, and accepted her without question. Not desiring to tip off her identity as an FBI agent, Crowe played along with their assumptions. Monitoring their conversation, it became clear that each of these people was suffering from similar auditory hallucinations, which they referred to as "the Call." One of the men, whose name was Elias, was missing his left hand, and revealed with some anger that he had cut it off himself years earlier while under the influence of "the Call." The other members of the group, while not so mutilated, reported similar experiences and compulsions.

They were clearly not an organized group, as traditional cults tend to be, and betrayed no focus of belief or purpose. Rather, they were an apparently random assortment of persons who arrived on this particular beach on this particular time and day because all had "heard voices" compelling them to do so, or in some other way "just knew" they were supposed to be there. They assumed that SA Crowe was afflicted as they were, and she said nothing to disabuse them of that notion. No one stood out as the leader of the group, although one woman, later identified as Ms. Terry Schnabel, did attempt to moderate the group's discussion, which had the flavor of a group therapy session or twelve-step meeting.

When SA Crowe was invited to tell her story of hearing "the Call," she managed to question the group to find out if anyone knew of Dr. Martin Rivera. Although none knew of him by that name, they were familiar with a person they called "Marty," who had attended similar recent gatherings of the group. They were unanimously of the opinion that "Marty" was deeply in the grip of "the Call," and some suggested that they didn't think he would live long. None of them had any idea how to locate "Marty." None of them knew anything about SORG or Lt. Carlisle. SA Crowe is to be commended for her delicate handling of the situation.

The informal gathering broke up at approximately 8:30 pm PST, and the various members went their separate ways. Determining no immediate danger for any of them, and with no evidence of a crime committed by any of them, the agents had no grounds to prevent their departure. SA Fawkes briefly detained Ms. Terry Schnabel for additional questioning. After identifying himself as an FBI agent, he explained to her the reasons for the inquiry into the whereabouts of Dr. Rivera. She was cooperative, but had no additional information to provide. She did, however, give SA Fawkes a medallion featuring the same symbol drawn by Carlisle on the wall of his bathtub enclosure, expressing concern that, having been exposed to "the Call," SA Fawkes was now in direct danger of being afflicted with auditory hallucinations himself.

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Though the group did not seem to meet the definition of a true cult, it did seem that activity similar to that described in SA Neville's Cthulhu Cult report was going on in southern California. A number of deaths generally fitting the pattern had been described, and the person named "Marty" described by the cultists on the beach was very likely the missing Dr. Martin Rivera. There remained only a few days left before the completion of the sacrificial cycle posited by the theory of the case.

The case agents received a general bulletin issued from FBI HQ on 28 October at 9:08 a.m. EST, advising all active agents with operational contacts in Santa Monica of the receipt of the following note:

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Dear FBI

MARTY WILL GIVE HIMSELF SO GRATE CUTHOOLOO CAN RISE  
FROM HIS TOOM IN THE SEA WHEN THE BIG BARE STANDS ON  
THE EARTH TO THE NORTH TWO ROTATIONS BEFORE THE HAL-  
LOWMAS. THATS WHAT MY DREEM SAID ANYWAY. TELL  
CUTHLOOLOO YOUR SORRY FOR TRYING TO STOP HIM.

YOUR FRIEND,

BOB H.

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The note was postmarked from Santa Monica. The case agents took an immediate interest. One of the men on the beach the previous night had been named Bob, and it was suspected that he was the author of the note. All local law enforcement agencies were notified to be on the lookout for anyone matching his description, and additional notice was sent to Los Angeles County Beach Patrol, in case he should show up near another lifeguard tower. An APB was issued for Martin Rivera, and his home and the location of the former SORG offices were put under surveillance.

Agents Crowe and Fawkes met with Lt. MacNeil and LA County Sheriff's detective Anderson Mills on the night of 29 October to discuss a plan of action. With Martin Rivera and the Zip™ disk still missing, and the mysterious pipe-smoking Russian man still at large, both Rivera's life and national security seemed endangered.

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As a result of the notifications sent out, agents Fawkes and Crowe were promptly informed of a 911 call placed to Los Angeles County emergency services at 8:02 pm PST on 29 October.<sup>12</sup> The call was traced to a payphone at the In and Out Burger at Sunset E. of La Brea in Hollywood. The caller identified himself as "Bob," and said that "Marty...was going to be hurt." He claimed to have "dreamed" the following numbers: N34 05.665 and W118 19.075. When an LAPD squad car later drove by the location, they found no trace of the caller.

It was quickly determined that the numbers provided by "Bob" were a latitude and longitude, corresponding to the southwest corner of LeConte Junior High School at 1316 N. Bronson Avenue in Hollywood. Agents Crowe and Fawkes, along with Lt. MacNeil and Detective Mills, went there immediately.

Entering the building through a door leading to an auditorium, the investigating officers discovered Ms. Terry Schnabel sitting on the stage in the darkened theater. She sat at the center of a symbol identical to the one seen on the bathtub enclosure and on the medallion she had herself given to SA Fawkes. The symbol was made out of tape on the stage floor. Ms. Schnabel was non-responsive to questions, apparently in some kind of catatonia or trance-like state. A quick search of the backstage area revealed no other people, but noises were heard coming from the bottom of a staircase in the stage-right wings. No light switch could be found, and the stairs led into a darkened room. The investigators proceeded down the stairs with flashlights and guns drawn.

The basement of the school featured many small cluttered storage rooms connected by irregular hallways. The cultists who had been present on Santa Monica beach a few days previously were all in the basement, along with a few additional cultists. All seemed nearly catatonic: none provided cooperation or resistance. SA Fawkes identified himself as an FBI agent and called out for Dr. Rivera, if present, to identify himself. No answer was forthcoming. The investigating officers split up to search the basement in the hope of finding Rivera before it was too late. Although the cultists seemed disturbed by our presence, they offered no organized interference.

SA Fawkes located Dr. Rivera in a closet in a central storage room. He was in the process of cutting himself in the neck with a hacksaw, much like the one Lt. Carlisle used on himself. Calling for the assistance of fellow officers, Fawkes managed to disarm Rivera, who was visibly very upset. Rivera was immediately escorted out of the building, where he waited on the

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<sup>12</sup> Officer J. Wiens, LAPD 911 Commander. Pers. com., 29 October, 1997.

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steps with SA Crowe until an ambulance could arrive. While Crowe stood guard over Rivera, Fawkes, MacNeil and Mills escorted the remaining cultists out of the school building. Once outside, they seemed to stir from their catatonic state. They were held for questioning, but claimed to have no clear memory of what brought them to the school's basement, or their purpose for being there. Medical transport was arranged for Rivera. The other cultists were questioned and released.

Rivera is currently a patient at Los Angeles County Hospital, room 1019. He is under 24-hour suicide watch. He has been diagnosed as suffering from dissociative schizophrenia, and is unable to answer questions. Although his neck wound is not serious, his doctors are not optimistic about his overall chances of recovery.<sup>13</sup>

Acting under a warrant issued by federal judge Judith Anne Ruha, a team of FBI evidence technicians made a thorough sweep of the LeConte Junior High School auditorium and basement. No trace of the missing Zip™ disk was found.

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CONCLUSION

Lt. Michael Carlisle died as a result of self-inflicted injuries, possibly committed while under the influence of auditory hallucinations brought about by exposure to audio files on a classified government computer disk. Evidence suggests that he was aware of these hallucinations and was making a heroic effort to save his own life.

The hallucinations apparently experienced by Lt. Carlisle were part of a larger pattern, previously identified by FBI Special Agent Christopher Neville in 1993. While we may disregard as "ridiculous" the conclusions reached by SA Neville, we can do so only at the risk of further loss of life. It is not the place of the FBI to judge the validity of a cultist's beliefs: only to assess the risk of criminal behavior arising as a result of such beliefs, and preventing such criminal behavior when possible. Whatever may be the truth behind the source of the auditory hallucinations, the fact remains that those in the grip of them are capable of violent and self-destructive behavior. At least three deaths in the last month have been tied to these hallucinations in Southern California, and Dr. Martin Rivera would surely have added to that list if he had not been stopped in time.

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<sup>13</sup> Dr. Scott Branney, LACH. Pers. com., 31 October, 1997.

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It is recommended that the names of those currently known to be afflicted with these hallucinations be forwarded to LA County mental health services for occasional follow-up. Furthermore, continued Bureau monitoring of "Cthulhu cult" activity seems prudent.

For her cooperation in the case, citizen Claudia Cowen is to be commended. It seems unlikely that the disk she provided to the case agents can be safely returned to her. It is recommended that a board of review from the NSF assist her in determining the future course of her research career.

There remain open questions about the missing Zip™ disk, and the possible connection of the pipe-smoking Russian "Ivar" to the alleged Ukrainian spy "Igor" and to the anonymous 911 caller who reported Carlisle's death in a Slavic dialect. Due to the classified nature of Operation Deep Six, further inquiry into these matters falls to Lt. MacNeil and the NIC. Agents Fawkes and Crowe stand ready to assist the NIC in its inquiries if so requested.

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