

Dear

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for allowing me to participate in the 4-8 June 2001 "Field Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course."

You should be justifiably proud of your entire organization. They are, without exception, a highly motivated, professionally competent, dedicated and caring staff. I should especially like to thank Colonel Jonathan Newmark, LTC Beverly Maliner, Major Cora Randle, Major Michael McMahon, SFC Richard McCarthy, Ms. Rosalie Holland, Mr. Thomas Story, Ms. Denise Ralls and Mr. John Day for the personal effort they extended on my behalf.

The organizational aspects of the course were first rate! Everything was designed to teach the medical treatment of chemical and biological warfare casualties with the greatest of ease and understanding. From the design of the classroom with its many audio-visual aids, including molecular models of all the chemical agents suspended from the ceiling, to just about every known piece of medical chemical defense equipment in the United States inventory lining the walls, and the computer learning area (with internet access) in the back of the room. Clearly a great deal of thought went into the classroom's design. The course itself was taught with an unusually large number of highly instructive audiovisual aids, which greatly simplified the understanding of potentially difficult concepts, i.e., antidote enhancement with pyridostigmine pre-treatment for soman intoxication. Not only was the screen in the front of the room huge, but repeater T.V.s mounted in the ceiling along the side of the room made sure that even those of us with less than perfect vision could see every slide with ease from any location within the classroom. Even creature comforts such as a decent lunch delivered to the classroom, and a menu provided at the beginning of each day to ease the ordering process were unparalleled. But the thing that most impressed me was the high level of questions posed by the student body, most of whom were either nonmedical or medical at the EMT, or

medic level. These students undertook their lessons with a seriousness of purpose.

I can completely relate to Dr. Newmark's story about his meeting with the Chairman of Neurology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in reference to preparedness of that hospital to receive military casualties from the Gulf War. Although that gentleman had been chairman of the department for five years, he had no idea that he was responsible for preparing for such an event. At many hospitals such a lack of knowledge and preparation seems to prevail. The first responders, EMTs, fire and police departments may well be practicing, but in my opinion that level of expertise may well stop at the hospital's door. Two examples from my personal experience: (1) I called our hospital's pharmacy and asked them how much 2-PAM Chloride they had in stock, the answer was "Two-Pam What?" I surveyed our anesthesia group for their knowledge of treatment of chemical agent casualties. Our department at the time had about twelve CRNAs, and nineteen physicians. Other than an occasional reference to using atropine for nerve agent casualties only one of the physicians, and none of the CRNAs, had an extensive knowledge or training in the treatment of these injuries; and her reason for knowing about these agents was in itself frightening. She had been born in the Soviet Union, went to medical school there, and was required to learn about these agents; however, being of Jewish background she emigrated to the United States as soon as she was allowed. With the knowledge and credentials that your courses have provided to me, I hope to begin the process of changing, to the extent that one person can, this lack of knowledge and interest. Beginning with our anesthesia department, I will be giving a series of lectures on this subject matter at our Tuesday morning medical education conferences. At a latter date I hope to involve more of the hospital staff, and then offer my services to speak at the EMT, first responder, police and fire department level.

I have already spoken with several members of your staff about attending the course given 20 thru 26 October 2001 on the "Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties." They stated that I should write you a letter formally requesting a slot in this class. I have already had the necessary vacation time approved by the chairman of the anesthesia department in order to attend this course. Please consider this letter as a formal request to attend the "Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course" to be given in house 20 to 26 October 2001.

Again, I wish to thank you for having extended to me the privilege of attending the "Field Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course." It was a truly unique, and educationally enlightening and rewarding experience.

Sincerely,