

PUGWASH CONFERENCES ON SCIENCE AND WORLD AFFAIRS

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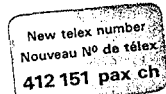
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Geneva, 15 February 1988

Colonel-General Nikolai Chervov *General*
Chief of the Department of the ~~Central~~ Staff
of the Armed Forces of the USSR

Moscow
USSR

Dear General Chervov,

This is to let you know that our meeting in June will start after lunch on Saturday 11 June and will end on Monday 13 June at lunch time. The slight change in time was made with the knowledge that you usually arrive in Geneva late on Saturday morning and that you can stay for a press conference usually held on the following Tuesday. Mr McNamara and the other principal participants have agreed to the change in time.

I would like to take up with you another important matter which concerns Professor Matthew Meselson about whom we have previously communicated. Following our Pugwash Workshop on Chemical Warfare recently held in Geneva (23 and 24 January, ... copy of report enclosed), Meselson went to Moscow on 25 January at the invitation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, through Academician Vitalii Goldanskii now a member of the Pugwash Council. Meselson's visit was for the purpose of meeting with some of the Ministry of Health people he had met in September 1986 with regard to preparing a scientific paper explaining the anthrax incident in Sverdlovsk which has caused much anti-Soviet agitation in the West.

During the week of 25 January Meselson met several times with the following people. The meetings were arranged through the Ministry of Health with the cooperation of Dr Evgeny Chazov.

Peter Nicolaevitch BURGASOV
Former Deputy Minister of Health

Olga Veriaminova YAMPOLSKAYA
Assistant to Professor Nikiforov

Vladimir Nikolaevitch NIKIFOROV
Head, Department of Infectious Diseases
Central Postgraduate Institute

Meselson invited the above people plus Vladimir Petrovitch Sergeev, Director, Institute of Epidemiology, Moscow, to come to the USA as guests of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts, which sponsors the Pugwash group in the USA. Arrangements would be made for them to meet leading medical authorities at Harvard and in the Boston hospital area and elsewhere for discussions on infectious diseases, including AIDS, of particular interest

bcc: J. Perry Robinson

M. Meselson

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to the USSR. At the same time the USSR visitors would be asked to give lectures on the anthrax incident in Sverdlovsk as a natural occurrence, and not as an accident in a biological warfare production plant, an accusation fostered by anti-Soviet individuals in the USA and elsewhere. We believe that such lectures and an opportunity to speak with the medical authorities directly involved in the Sverdlovsk outbreak would go far in neutralizing such accusations.


Burgasov, Nikiforov and Yampolskaya have accepted to come to the USA on 20 March for about one week for the purposes outlined above. Meselson is awaiting word about Sergeev. In order to avoid any possible delay concerning visas for the USA it is essential that the above individuals apply to the USA Embassy in Moscow for visas as soon as possible. Meselson would then take appropriate action with the Department of State in Washington.

I am sure that a mere phone call from you to Dr Chazov's office would help matters greatly in securing that early application for visas are made and that everything proceeds as arranged by Professor Meselson. After many years of effort on our part this would finally ensure some concrete results.

I am asking Academician Goldanskii and our Pugwash office in Moscow to forward a copy of this letter to you as I do not have your exact address in Moscow.

With cordial personal wishes,

Sincerely yours,


M.M. Kaplan
Secretary-General

cc: Academician Vitalii Goldanskii