

MacArthur

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY



7 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

October 6, 1988

Ruth Adams  
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Suite 700  
140 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ruth:

I am writing to request supplemental support from the MacArthur Foundation for the U.S.-U.S.S.S.R. working group on the 1979 outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk.

A summary of what has been accomplished in this project thus far appears in the enclosed September issue of the FAS Public Interest Report. I also enclose copies of relevant press clippings. As you will see, the presentations of the Soviet scientists in the U.S. in April have definitely opened the subject to reconsideration, but further contact and information are required.

Last month, in Moscow, I made arrangements for a visit to Moscow and Sverdlovsk by a small group of private and U.S. government scientists, to take place in January, 1989. Its purpose is to further clarify and document the 1979 outbreak. You will recall that we had talked on the telephone about this during the summer.

The makeup of the American group and what we want to accomplish are outlined in the attached copy of a letter to Soviet Minister of Health Chazov. It is important that two of our group, Lieutenant Colonel Martin Crumrine and Dr. Arnold Kaufman are from relevant U.S. government organizations. Both were selected for participation by their respective superior officers. Crumrine is at the U.S. Army Medical Institute for Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland and Kaufman is at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. Their participation would ensure direct input to the parts of the United States government that

have been concerned with arms-control issues raised by the anthrax outbreak. In my opinion, the encouragement they have both received to take part in the project from their respective organizations means that important segments of the US government are now willing to review their positions on the nature and origin of the outbreak. Thus, direct participation by Crumrine and Kaufmann would give quite special importance to the proposed project. A second important feature would be the visit to Sverdlovsk itself, including interviews with survivors and with numerous individuals who took part in dealing with the outbreak at the time. As you know, until now, the Soviets have allowed no on-site inquiry into the anthrax outbreak.

I estimate that the cost of the proposed visit to the Soviet Union would be approximately \$11,000 for travel and associated expenses and \$6,000 for publication and office costs, for a total of \$17,000. We still have an unspent amount of \$8,000 left from the \$50,000 the Foundation provided for this project in January, 1987. Therefore, I am asking the Foundation for an undertaking to provide up to \$9,000, conditional upon our receiving the necessary invitations from the Soviets.

I believe that the successful completion of the proposed visit could lead to the resolution of an important barrier to progress in biological and chemical arms control and would set an important precedent for much greater openness in dealing with unusual or suspicious outbreaks of disease in future.

Sincerely yours,

*Matt*

Matthew Meselson

MM:pb

Enclosures