

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

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MILL HILL,
LONDON, N.W.7.

26th October, 1970.

Personal

Professor M. Meselson,
The Biological Laboratories,
Harvard University,
16 Divinity Avenue,
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138,
U.S.A.

Dear Matt,

I am really writing this letter to you on behalf of Professor Pierre Biquard, Secretary General of the World Federation of Scientific Workers, because he has been led to suppose (perhaps correctly) that you mistrust becoming involved in things organized by or through the W.F.S.W. and thinks that if I put a proposition to you, you are more likely to consider it!

The proposition is that you should come to Paris on December 11th and 12th to meet a group of North Vietnamese who want to present new evidence about the use of chemical weapons in Vietnam. Apparently they will be sending people including scientists and have asked the W.F.S.W. to arrange for a group of eminent scientists to meet and receive the evidence on the first day and then to have a session open to journalists on the second day. The persons who are organizing this reception for the North Vietnamese are mentioned in the enclosed list.

I have not been able to find out why the North Vietnamese wish to arrange to present their evidence in this way nor anything about what the evidence is, nor whether it will be presented elsewhere afterwards. I have pointed out to Biquard that if it were a question of relatively cursory examination of the evidence, with the assumption that it would be accepted, then a group of famous nonspecialist scientists would be less valuable for judging its worth than would a group of shrewd and hard-headed journalists. However, apparently they think that the evidence is "primarily scientific" and they propose to bring in people like Lederer and Galton as relatively experienced in these questions. Very obviously they want you to go because of your commitment for the A.A.A.S., and indeed it may well be something which you ought to know about at first hand. At the moment I am only writing to warn you to keep the dates free if possible. I understand that Biquard will be in London at the end of this week and I may be able to find out more about why the whole thing is being arranged this way and whether it is a purely propoganda move or will in fact bring forward evidence which ought to be properly judged and widely known. I gather that if you were to come the World Federation would pay your expenses, although I was not sure whether this would be proper.

I will write again when I know more. Let me say that I think that the job you have been doing is a very good one. With best regards.

Yours ever,

John

WORLD FEDERATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORKERS

世界科學工作者協會

WELTFÖDERATION DER WISSENSCHAFTLER

ВСЕМИРНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ НАУЧНЫХ РАБОТНИКОВ

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Le Secrétaire Général: Prof. R. BIQUARD, 10 Rue Vauquelin, 75-Paris 5e, France.

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Téleg. MONDSCIFED PARIS

Dr. J. Humphrey, F.R.S.,
N.I.M.R., The Rigeway, Mill Hill,
London N.W.7.

Paris, 23rd October 1970

Dear colleague,

For many months now, and particularly due to the war in Vietnam, there is a growing concern among scientists - as well as in public opinion in general - about chemical warfare.

For this reason, under the sponsorship of an Organizing Committee, the composition of which is herewith enclosed, an "International Scientific Meeting on Chemical Warfare in Vietnam" will be held in Paris on 11 - 12 December 1970.

Although a detailed programme is not already fixed, our intention is to invite from 30 to 50 qualified scientists including Vietnamese colleagues.

We know that from Vietnam reports and documentation will be provided and a film will be shown. Other participants will also deliver reports.

In principle, the first day will be reserved for the invited scientists who will discuss the reports and, we hope, to arrive to some conclusions.

The second day meeting will be open and journalists will be invited; an account of the first day's discussions and conclusions will be given and the participants will answer questions asked by the audience.

We would very much appreciate if you could participate in this meeting.

If this is the case I would like to ask you to consider the possibility of covering entirely or partly your travel and accommodation expenses, but if this seems impossible, we shall cover them.

Hoping to receive a positive answer from you I remain at your entire disposal for any further information.

Yours sincerely,


P. Biquard.

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INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING ON THE CHEMICAL
WARFARE IN VIETNAM

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

- Prof. Dorothy Hodgkin, F.R.S., Nobel Laureate, Oxford (U.K.)
Prof. E. Lederer, C.N.R.S., Gif-sur-Yvette (France)
Prof. J.M. Legay, Dept. of Biology, Lyon (France)
Prof. A. Lwoff, Nobel Laureate, Centre of Cancer, Villejuif
(France)
Acad. I. Malek, Institute of Microbiology, Praha (Czechoslovakia)
Prof. A. Minkowski, Centre de recherches neonatales, Paris.
Prof. H.W. Pfeiffer, Montana University (U.S.A.)
Prof. Steven Rose, The Open University, London (U.K.)
Prof. A. Roussel, Faculté de Médecine, Paris (France)
Prof. J. Roux, Faculté de Médecine, Montpellier (France)
Prof. L. Huzicka, Nobel Laureate, Zürich (Switzerland)
Prof. F.D. Hall, University College, London (U.K.)

The Secretary of the Organizing Committee is:

Prof. P. Biquard,

Secretary General of the World Federation
of Scientific Workers,

10, rue Vauquelin, Paris 5e

téléphone: 331 30-68