



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

November 10, 1971

Professor Matthew Meselson  
Biological Laboratories  
16 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Dear Matt,

I am so glad that we had a chance to talk at some length yesterday morning. I am passing copies of your memorandum to several other people who share an interest in this question.

In response to your inquiry about the capacity of existing parties to a multilateral treaty to reject treaty relations with a state that has ratified or acceded without reservations, I subsequently consulted with several of my friends here who are well informed on treaty law. We know of no precedents for any such action except in cases in which the objecting state asserts that the party acceding is not a state or that it is not the recognized government of a state. Nothing other than what is communicated to the depositary may be the basis for rejecting treaty relations. A state by the mere act of signing a treaty extends a binding offer to other states to enter into treaty relations with them.

Please do let me know when next you come to Washington. I am always very happy to talk to you about any subject, not excluding our favorite one!

With warm regards to you and Susan,

Yours sincerely,

*Dick*

R. R. Baxter  
Counselor on International Law

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