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Dear Matt,

I am returning the transcript with my edits which are minor. In addition, I have enclosed a short statement expressing my reservations about the conference. I wrote it to go after Leonard's (page 22, third session) but you may use it if and where you wish. I hope you will not feel me too unkind in my last remarks on scholarship.

On review of the transcript, I find General Lennon's comments on your proposal to be more as you remember them than as did I. I will be interested to see what happens in the final draft.

Thanks again for the opportunity to participate and for the chance to get in a "final word." I hope when your academic schedule permits we'll have a chance to talk again.

Yours sincerely,

Arthur Herrington

I disagree with Mr. Leonard's last statement. I do not feel this panel should recommend the government embark on negotiations with the Soviet Union on chemical arms control at this time. Even if such negotiations were desirable, I do not believe we should recommend the specific measures presented by Professor Meselson.

My objections are not to negotiating chemical arms limitations. What disturbs me is the lack of any careful analysis of the risks in establishing limits or not. In my view, this panel has expressed many opinions but has been notable in its inability to present facts. We need analysis and agreement on, among other things:

1. Specific military risks arising from the violation of any proposed agreement, especially that of the sudden use of limited quantities of lethal chemicals on key points in Europe.

2. The ease with which any proposed agreement could be violated covertly depending on the type of agents and quantities produced or retained.

3. The risks of continuing current policy for five to ten years or more, specifically including the possible development of a new generation of lethal agents.

4. The costs and payoffs of buying a limited offensive chemical deterrent to be stockpiled in the US, including the marginal costs to delivery systems, say, tactical aircraft.

5. The chance of diffusion of lethal chemical technology if and if there are not agreements between the US and Soviet Union.

It is my belief these questions have not been answered within the government or without; the work has simply not been done. This is supposed to be a scholarly group. It seems to me the first canon of scholarship is that you find out the facts before you make up your mind. I do not think we have done so. If this panel were to recommend anything, it seems to me it might well propose for the future a more careful, factual, analytical approach to chemical arms control.

Conference on Policies for Chemical Weapons

and Chemical Arms Control

January 21-22, 1977

Edited Transcript of the Discussion

(DRAFT VERSION)

In this pass are my Edits: P. 15 Session I
P. 16 Session II
P. 17a "
P. 18 "
P. 19 "

The line insert is needed to complete my thought as understood by Gen Lennon in this question top of p 17.

You have done a superb editing job so far. Wish I really spoke that plainly. C Herrington

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FELD: When you refer to large Soviet stockpiles do you mean stockpiles in the east European countries where the Soviet Warsaw Pact forces are deployed or stockpiles which you believe to exist in the territory of the Soviet Union?

LENNON: There is a combination. Since we learned more about their protective capability in 1973, we have been searching for more information and evidence. We believe that there is a large stockpile of chemical munitions in the Soviet Union. We know that there is a considerable amount already deployed. We have little confidence that we know how much.

DINE: Also along the Chinese border?

LENNON: Yes, there as well.

FELD: If you could be assured that there was no Soviet deployment of chemical stocks in the forward areas, from a combination of verification measures plus intelligence activities which must in the satellite countries be extensive, would that be sufficient verification to satisfy the defense establishment?

LENNON: I do not see how that could qualify for verification. It would certainly be a confidence-building measure, an important first step.

FELD: You would want some measure of information about what is going on in the Soviet Union?

LENNON: Yes.

HERRINGTON: With nuclear weapons the focus is on the existence of the weapons, but chemicals involve field systems that require a high degree of training, and perhaps ~~the~~ control ~~is really in the~~ should really be on operation? Would you prefer to see restrictions on training that would reduce the readiness of deployed forces to use these weapons, which would be verifiable, rather than a focus on stocks?

LENNON: I would say we would have to see both.

SCOVILLE: Granted that one must accept the possibility of some hidden stockpiles, if you saw large stockpiles of existing materials actually destroyed, would you be convinced of their good faith?

With regard to the question of balance, I think that for years a conventional imbalance in NATO has been more or less implicit in all the articles in the literature; this was offset by an imbalance in our favor on the tactical nuclear side, but that has now been neutralized and there is therefore a problem on the conventional side. If France is included, it is true that NATO has a quarter of a million more men under arms than the Soviets, but that does not necessarily mean that we have more combat power.

LEONARD: I would not assert any such simplicitude. However, there is a credible conventional defense of Western Europe without nuclear weapons. . . . There are all sorts of ways to win victories, but their nature is essentially irrelevant if the achievement of a Soviet victory means that they must then encounter the NATO nuclear posture.

SCOVILLE: If the Soviets decide to use a large-scale chemical capability in Western Europe, this is a major escalatory action in a moral sense if not in a military sense, and if they are worried that a large-scale conventional attack might result in nuclear war, they should be even more worried about it if they move to chemical warfare. It seems to me that the Russians view our nuclear force as a major deterrent, whether we say it is a deterrent or not.

HERRINGTON: I agree, but wars start when people get sufficiently angry that they will take the risks involved. The knowledge that you have the capability to respond in a certain way helps to hold them back, but once they take the risk there is still the question whether you will actually use the capability. For the Soviets the question would be would we use nukes against chemical attack.

SCOVILLE: We can counter this by having good protective capabilities. They will not use chemicals on a small scale if they are not going to gain anything. Furthermore, there is the moral deterrent to their taking the step from conventional to CW.

HERRINGTON: In ~~cost~~ dollar terms, one can probably build for modest cost a counter to selective chemical threats that otherwise would hurt you very badly. A counter to open chemical warfare up and down the front on a protracted basis would be very expensive.

LEONARD: With regard to Mr. Herrington's suggestion that for a rather modest cost it would be possible to develop capabilities which would enable us to counter selective chemical attacks, I think the political facts of life are against that possibility. We have a small stockpile in Europe that is maintained there in a sense by luck, because there has not been an incident to precipitate the sort of political chain reaction that would lead to its withdrawal. But I think it is the judgment of almost everybody who has a feel for the situation in Europe, and especially in Germany, that an attempt to substantially enhance that capability there, even with the use of binaries (assuming that binaries have been developed and stockpiled in substantial quantity and that the delivery means are available), would probably fail and would as likely as not lead to the withdrawal of the very modest capacity that is there at the present time. I think we are really discussing a non-option that may have some military validity, although I would question that. But that certainly has very little reality when one considers the enormous problem involved in getting it through the Congress in the first place and then trying to get our Allies to agree to it. This is the context in which the choice ought to be viewed when we consider other ways of dealing with such scenarios.

HERRINGTON: I was referring ~~at least~~ in large part to defensive measures.

As far as offensive options are concerned, I agree that the political constraints to deployment of chemicals in Europe are quite severe. One reason for this is that we have not been explicit about what the threat is and what the counters might be, and thus our Allies have not examined the implications for them in any detail. Furthermore, we do have long-range systems and depots in this country where weapons can be held until the critical time frame. The concept of having available a plan to utilize chemicals in some way does not necessarily mean the immediate deployment of short-range weapons as a counter. The retaliatory capability should be a selective and controlled one. I would not foreclose those options; I appreciate that some

of them are difficult, but I also find it difficult to be faced with certain potential threats to which the only counter is to employ the tactical nuclears.

FELD: Assuming that the Soviets have a chemical capability and that they have sufficient assimilation of this capability so that we cannot discount the possibility that they might under some circumstances in a foreseeable conflict decide that there was advantage to their side using them, is in fact the like-with-like deterrent a more effective response than a purely protective deterrent? We have not addressed ourselves to the question except in passing as to whether pure protection would not be even a more effective, less escalatory deterrent to Soviet use of chemicals.

HERRINGTON: Let me preface further exchange by pointing out that NATO and the Warsaw Pact are massively asymmetric in many ways -- in the concept and utilization of tactical air, in doctrine and use of forces, in relations with allies. Therefore, one might structure a combined offensive-defensive U.S. capability that could be called like-for-like that would look nothing at all like that of the Soviets. Like-for-like does not mean that we have to have the same kind of weapons, the same kind of delivery systems, the same kind of protective gear, ~~and~~ or the same kind of institutions.

I think it should be understood that the U.S. does not have a defensive capability. Masks and suits for the troops in the field will not provide it to us. Command posts and intelligence installations throughout Europe on which we are critically dependent to operate a theater war will have to be defended. It will require a massive program and entail tremendous expense, and priorities will have to be assigned. To say that we ought to have a defensive capability goes beyond present U.S. policy..