

April 11, 1979

Dr. Linus Pauling
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Dear Linus:

Your letter of January 23 was forwarded to me here, where I am working in the laboratory of Ed Lewis until August. Please accept my apology for taking so long to answer. Since I last wrote to you, at the end of 1975, I have continued to work for chemical and biological disarmament, although less actively than before the Biological Weapons Convention came into force and the United States became a party to the Geneva Protocol earlier that year.

As you know, the Biological Weapons Convention prohibits the development, production and possession of biological and toxin weapons. It does not apply, however, to chemical weapons. The Geneva Protocol prohibits chemical warfare but is, in effect, a no-first-use agreement, not a disarmament treaty. Chemical weapons stockpiles are maintained by several of its parties, including the United States and the Soviet Union. The remaining step needed to achieve international legal prohibition of the entire spectrum of chemical and biological weapons is therefore the conclusion of a chemical disarmament treaty. This is where I have concentrated my efforts since 1975.

My principal activity in this period was the organization of a conference on Chemical Weapons and Chemical Arms Control, held in January 1977 at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Boston, and the editing of its proceedings for publication. I enclose a copy of the resulting book, published in April 1978 by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Recent negotiations for chemical disarmament have been considerably more difficult and detailed than those which produced the Biological Weapons Convention. This reflects the greater importance assigned to chemical weapons by military planners, particularly in the NATO and the Warsaw Pact alliances. I therefore focused the deliberations of the conference on the problems and benefits of chemical disarmament in Europe, inviting government officials and advisors from the United States, Canada, England and West Germany. Although government policies are not decided at such conferences, they can be clarified and influenced. Considering the range of viewpoints represented and the diverse national and institutional backgrounds of the participants, we were particularly encouraged to find that by the end of the conference we were in broad agreement on the desirability of chemical disarmament and on a set of specific provisions which might form the core of a treaty. When the conference proceedings were published, copies were provided to members of Congress and to several

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hundred government officials, advisors, journalists and others likely to be interested here and abroad. I took copies to a number of persons for further discussion and presented a seminar to a group of officials and journalists in Washington assembled by the Carnegie Endowment.

In March 1977, the National Academy held a forum on Research with Recombinant DNA at which I chaired a workshop on implications for biological arms control and disarmament. I did this in order to help dispel the mistaken and harmful notion that the Biological Weapons Convention fails to prohibit biological weapons arising from new techniques, such as those involving recombinant DNA. I invited representatives of the United States and Britain who could make this point with particular authority. A copy of the workshop report, prepared by James McCullough of the Library of Congress, is enclosed.

I continue to lecture on chemical and biological disarmament to local groups and in 1977 and 1978 as a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar I gave public lectures and held smaller group discussions on CB disarmament with students and faculty members at Hiram College in Ohio, Rockford College in Illinois, Williams College in Massachusetts, Walla Walla College in Washington, Pomona College in California and at Emory University and the University of Massachusetts.

Currently, Julian Perry Robinson of the University of Sussex and I are completing an article on Chemical Weapons and Chemical Disarmament for Scientific American, hoping to make clear the sound basis for chemical disarmament to a wide audience.

I enclose a number of items, listed on a separate sheet, which may be of use.

My wife, Sarah, and I are planning an automobile trip with our two daughters to visit our friends Frank and Mary Stahl in Eugene, Oregon. If you have time on June 5 or 6, I would like very much to stop by to see you on the return trip. I regret missing Peter here but I look forward to hearing news of Ava Helen and you from Linda.

Affectionately,

Matthew Meselson

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Enclosures

Bibliography of Papers on Chemical and Biological Warfare

Curriculum Vitae

Research with Recombinant DNA, Report of Workshop No. 6, National Academy of Sciences, 1977

Chemical Weapons and Chemical Arms Control, ed. M. Meselson, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1978.

Citation accompanying honorary degree from Columbia University, June 1971.

Citation accompanying University of Chicago Alumni Award, June 1971.

Citation accompanying California Institute of Technology Distinguished Alumni Award, May 1975.

Citation accompanying Leo Szilard Award, April 1978.

Aside from the above and some items I sent in December 1975, the only other public statements about my activities I have are two additional citations that cannot be photocopied. They are:

"For unique and effective efforts to prevent biological and chemical warfare."

Public Service Award of the Federation of American Scientists, 1972.

"For outstanding contributions to science including its interactions with society."

Lehman Award of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1975.