

to Brown

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES



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Mr. Bill Brown
NBC News
Room 1600 W
30 Rockefeller Center
New York, NY 10020

Dear Bill,

Here is a copy of our CW article which will appear in Scientific American in a few days.

I notice on page 69 of Newsweek for March 10 that Colonel Bobby Robinson, isarrent chief of the Chemical Corps, says the Soviets have a capability to conduct extensive chemical warfare for at least thirty days. If Newsweek is accurate, this is, so far as I know, the first numerical estimate of the Soviet offensive capability to come out of the Defense Department in about ten years. It suggdstliketiffocbebeasthe current esn-firmed estimate. Thirty days' worth would be about twice what we have in Germany and very much less thant what is presently stocked in the U.S. In the same paragraph, however, Newsweek repeats an estimate published in their 11 February issue which quotes Lt. Col. Gary Eifreed writing in the December issue of Army. Col. Eifreed states that "the total quantities of chemical agents held by the Soviets is approximately 350,000 tone contrasted with 42,000 tons in the U.S. stockpile." Actually, he is about right on the U.S. stockpile but his figure for the Soviets strains the imagination since it would imply something like 3.5 million tons of filled chemical weapons, enough for about ten years of hard chemical warfare, not the thirty days attributed to Colonel Robinson. What all this means is that there are a lot of phony numbers floating around and a lot of gross misinformation that can do no one any good.

I will be away from Cambridge next week and then closeted the following week writing a review paper but I look forward to seeing you whenever after that is best for you.

Sincerely,

Matthew Meselson

Encl.