

General CBW

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15 August 1980

Mr. Thomas M. Lamm  
Rt. #4, Box 636A  
Berea, KY 40403

Dear Mr. Lamm,

I enclose for your possible interest an article about chemical weapons. Without knowing what kinds of weapons are stored at Blue Grass or the conditions of their storage, it is difficult for me to provide detailed answers to your questions. Nerve gas weapons can be stored with considerable safety, particularly if fuses and detonators are kept separately. In nearly thirty years that the army has stockpiled nerve gas munitions, there has, to my knowledge, been no serious accident connected with storage or shipment.

I do not believe that the proposed binary nerve gas weapons would bring an overall improvement in safety. This is because binaries are much easier to manufacture and handle and therefore could, over time, come into the hands of nations or even dissident groups who do not now possess nerve gas weapons. In other words, the binary concept could make nerve gas ~~munitions~~ weapons more like conventional ones, with the resulting hazard of proliferation.

A good way to lobby for a CW treaty and a ban on chemical weapons production is to express your views to your representatives in Congress. I enclose a copy of an article by Julian Robinson for your interest.

Sincerely Yours,

Matthew Meselson  
Professor of Biochemistry