

Moscow, Apr. 84

Dear Dr. Hudson,

I've promised to tell you about my trip to Southeast Asia. I hope you'll be able to decipher my handwriting and to understand my personal version of English.

I do not have the slightest idea, when our discussions about scientific program exchange will be finished; it seems to me a time consuming business. I therefore take the opportunity to send you this letter with West German Broadcasting Corporation's air flight via Cologne and New York.

In some respect the trip was a flop, too many people, mainly officials, were involved, too many speeches, too many dinners, governmental officials carried us around the country and translated to us what they wished us to learn to know, some areas seemed to be taboo. I finally escaped, pretending allergic manifestations. I collected some samples near Phum Trung, Kampuchea, and Xiengkhoang, Laos, Ban Vinnai, Laos. Not just arte legis, I'm afraid. But I brought the samples back to Switzerland, with the help of a former colleague of mine, who is now a member of the Corps Diplomatique. Another colleague of mine, who is doing his annual service in our army at the AC Spiez examined the samples. The results substantiate your theory about natural occurrence of the trichothecene toxins in this area. One sample contained a small amount of pollen grains and no mycotoxins (Ban Vinnai); the other samples contained bigger amount of pollen grains and small amounts of trichothecenes (2g contained T-2 < 2). That's a low concentration, but fungi may not grow equally every year. Although the conclusion is soft, I think, it substantiates

your theory. I'm sorry that I cannot say more, but this was the only information I could get, because the Swiss Military Department (i.e. less euphemistic for Dep. of Defense) decided not to publish these findings. There was a coalition between the conservative Secretary of Defense and the Socialist Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and both the groups wished to avoid further tension because of domestic policy problems. Monsieur Aubert promised to publish the findings immediately after the decision for a Swiss membership of the U.N. But that won't happen, the confidantes won't join. So, please, take this information only for private use. Maybe I'll be able to collect new samples when I shall be visiting this area again, perhaps in autumn. I'll try to send them to you and give some to the Zürich Toxicology Institute where they have an expert on fusaria toxins.

The samples I originally intended to send to you in Beirut have been analyzed by the Zürich Toxicology Institute. The samples collected by our correspondent contained soil from the Shatt-el-Arab, Iraq, where a chemical attack for pushing back Iranians was supposed to have taken place. No mustard gas residues were found. Two samples were taken from the marshy ground of the island the Iranians occupied. It was reported that by pushing them back Iraq has used chemical agents. I have watched all the pictures our correspondent had sent quite carefully, low motion, magnification, cutting, but I did not see any signs of blisters, but in almost all cases shotgun wounds which must have caused death. That means that the assumption reported Iraq could not have reached this military success \* seemed to be false. Because sulfur, sodium bicarbonate was found in the samples I suspect that smoke was used first and later when Iranians got disorientated they were shot off like rabbits. Not only because of these findings I question a disorientated they were shot off like rabbits. Not only because of these findings I question a little bit the results of the experts UN report, March 26. \* without having used chemicals

Prof. Schlatter of the Tox. Institute Zürich told me that one expert of the AC Spiez lab. that examined the samples is not convinced that the samples were taken properly. I think the report contains too many night-bes. There are too many chemicals involved, and there are astonishingly few victims.

The UN report has been discussed by the German Parliaments subcommittee of Disarmament and Arms Control on Apr. 11th; the conservative members immediately tried to relate the results of the report to the suggestion of negotiations between the FRG and the GDR about a withdrawal of US resp. USSR chemical weapons on their soil; arguing that one can't trust the USSR. They came around with the mycotoxin argument that Prof Heyndrickx (Shunt) has brought again in the Iran/Iraq-matter. Egon Bahr and I finally reached a patt voting. But together with the other members of the socialist and the "green" party we did not succeed to change the minds of the members of the governmental parties to rethink the FRG's NO to these talks. If you were interested in the letters of Julius Lebbach to Erich Honnecker and Helmut Kohl and their answers, I can send them when I ~~in back~~ be back from Moscow, although I do not know if German reading won't be too difficult. Anyway, I think it is a remarkable fact that Honnecker agreed to these talks. Kohl refused, those talks might endanger US-German relations and the negotiations about a comprehensive chemical disarmament treaty. Although I have learned a lot about chemical disarmament in recent months, since we met, I am still somewhat, sometimes unsure about my own judgement. I especially question my judgement, when the other Germans interested in chemical disarmament have reached the same conclusions, that is because they are either only historians or/and on the left wing of the socialist or "green" party. Additionally I sometimes feel that my knowledge on chemical disarmament is

better than that of the other Germans, and that I can better explain the main issues to politicians - but that again makes me questioning the validity of my judgment; I'm vacillating between self-confidence and doubts. Sorry, I bothered you with my personal problems.

You may be interested in the following. A group of Mannheim citizens have complained before the Karlsruhe constitutional court that they won't accept the health risks caused by US stockpiling of chemical warfare agents in a US Army depot north of Mannheim. The court has refused to deal with the complaint, but the argument - based on informations of the German government - is interesting. It leads to the conclusion that with a high probability chemical agents are stored there, but stored safe.

I have to come back to the Yellow Rain problem. Although I believe that you are right in assuming natural sources of trichothecenes, I am not satisfied. For one thing, because the concentrations of my samples are rather low, but that may be due to seasonal fluctuations. But then, I wanted to know why the occurrence of mycotoxins has not been mentioned early. And I wish to learn what really caused the death of the victims. Prof. Prinz, who is credited to be an expert on Southeast Asian ecology, believes that the rapid change in ecology, the destruction of the natural environment might cause changes in the occurrence of microorganisms. If that is so further research must be done. In this field this research might be possible, but I don't think we can find out about the death cause of victims. Another chance to enlighten the different assumptions might be to request re-samples with standardized methods, so that it will become easier to find incompatibilities.

I do not think that we will find out the truth. There and in the case of other allegations, I think, the investigation procedures are not adequate. I cannot think of one allegation in the past which has been proven or disproven without remaining open questions. I sometimes fear that practical

politicians need suspicious to feed the already existing fears among nations and between the military blocks. I believe, the most important thing of all will be to prevent politicians to build up images of the enemy and frighten the people with these monsters. Politicians - sometimes - I suspect, believe ~~it~~ and fear their self created pictures, what I think is an important force behind the continuing arms buildup. During the last past twenty years we had about twenty arms control agreements, but none of these really has diminished the destructive capability, this has only become more perfect and precise. I therefore think, that we have to concentrate our work on two main issues: (1) on the psychological mechanisms working among different nations and systems. If Lorenz is right that a group or nation can only live together happily with an enemy in common like coral fish or clams, then we'll have to transcend the thinking in political systems and to replace it with the knowledge that human beings are all belonging to the same group in spite of political differences. (2) I have got the impression that in decision-making in the field of military policy - as well as elsewhere - political decisions are made long after the scientific, technological facts are available and after the strategic decision is established as a fact. I think it is important that politicians get all help to evaluate scientific and technological knowledge which might be of military interest. Political decisions must be ahead of strategic decisions, otherwise policy cannot control the military, as it is suggested in Western constitutions. Both are, I suspect, educational tasks, and difficult, but worthwhile.

I'm sorry that my letter has grown... but Moscow is somewhat boring in the evenings, I'm not permitted to visit Russian colleagues, and I won't like to see Swiss and Germans all evening.

If you like to contact me, although my letter does not leave open questions, I believe, please, address

to SÜDDEUTSCHER RUNDFUNK  
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D 7000 STUTTGART 1, FRG; they will know, where  
I am and <sup>will</sup> send my mail by air freight, which will not  
be controlled.

yours sincerely

Ursel Wolff.