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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 6, 1984

Dr. Matthew Meselson
Department of Biochemistry and
Molecular Biology
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Dr. Meselson:

Numerous questions have been raised over the capability of the United States to verify arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. The Reagan Administration has held up negotiations in several areas of arms control because of a concern that our verification capabilities would not be adequate to monitor Soviet compliance.

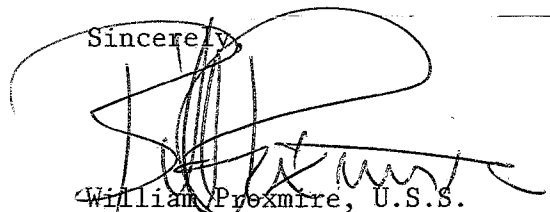
I would deeply appreciate having your assesement of the current verification capabilities of the United States through national technical or other means. In particular, I would be interested in your view on how adequate our current verification capabilities are or would be to monitor Soviet compliance with: the SALT and ABM treaties, the Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions treaties, a comprehensive test ban treaty, an INF treaty, the Administration's START treaty, a freeze treaty, a treaty banning the testing and deployment of anti-satellite weapons or other space-based weapons, a treaty banning the testing and deployment of sea-launched cruise missile. If present verification capabilities are not adequate, what other verification measures (such as on-site inspections) might be needed to monitor any of the above treaties?

I would also be interested in knowing what you think of future U.S. verification capability. Will it improve or weaken? Will the deployment of certain weapons systems make verification easier or more difficult?

Again, I appreciate having your thoughts or any research you might have conducted on these issues. During the past two years, I have been intensely reviewing the arms control literature and I have been delivering an arms control speech on the Senate floor every day the Senate has been in session. Your comments, therefore, will be most helpful.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,



William Proxmire, U.S.S.