

Proxmire - mm 076.

August 7, 1984

Senator William Proxmire
United States Senate
Committee on Banking, Housing
and Urban Affairs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Proxmire:

Thank you very much for your letter of July 6 asking my views of the capability of the United States to verify arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. The particular questions posed in your letter all deal with nuclear space and missile issues. I do not have thorough knowledge of these matters and therefore I am not able to respond to your questions regarding them.

It may be, however, that you are also interested in the area of chemical and biological weapons arms control. These are subjects which I have studied closely for more than 20 years, as a consultant to various agencies of the U.S. government and also as a university scientist. My strong opinion is that the United States' verification capability in chemical and biological matters must and can be considerably improved if we are to avoid seriously erroneous evaluations, such as some which have occurred in the recent past. If you or your staff wish to discuss this subject with me in detail, I would be glad to be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Matthew Meselson
Professor of Biochemistry
and Molecular Biology