

McGann
File

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March 15, 1985

Matthew Meselson
Department of Biochemistry &
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Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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Dear Dr. Meselson:

I am not sure of the role of Bee feces in the "Yellow Rain" controversy but one thing that I do know that I would like to make comment on so that you might consider it is the following.

In the early summer of every year in this part of the country particularly in mountainous regions where conifers abound, the ground, houses, vehicles, etc. are often completely covered with a fine yellow dust which is presumably a very fine pollen from the conifer trees themselves.

I do not know of the species of pollinating trees in Southeast Asia but I can well imagine that there may be some trees in that region that pollinate similarly to the conifers in our region. Undoubtedly, bee feces could become intermingled with this pollen. It is also likely that rain storms might cause the sudden appearance of pollen on the ground and the moist warm conditions might well foster all types of molds to proliferate in the pollen. The potential for development of biochemically identifiable toxins as a result of molds is well known.

I encourage you to consider the role of pollen in your deliberations as I do know that upon entering our mountain cabin each year, I must sweep pounds of this very fine pollen material from the porch and suspect that this ordinary phenomenon may be playing a role in the great debate involving "Yellow Rain".

Your comments in this regard would be appreciated and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Peter McGann

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PDM/ms