

Lown

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Bernard Lown, M.D.  
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Dear Bernie:

I hope you had a good trip to Germany. I did not send anything to take to your meetings because the matter began to develop in what may be the right direction anyway. Intervention at that point seemed unnecessary, even unwise. What has happened is that Dr. Burgasov (see my enclosed memo of September 25, 1986) is now in Geneva with a Soviet group of experts who, I believe, are now discussing the Sverdlovsk matter with their US counterparts.

As you know the US government has claimed that the epidemic of anthrax in Sverdlovsk of 1979 was inhalatory anthrax and resulted from biological warfare preparations in violation of the Biological Weapons Convention, 1972. The Soviets have said that the epidemic was natural. They are now providing much more detailed information about the epidemic than has been available until now. If the matter can be cleared up, a serious impediment to arms control and better relations will be removed and the way will be opened for measures to strengthen barriers to the hostile use of biology and medicine.

I recall that you plan to visit the Soviet Union sometime in May although I don't recall when. If you have the time I'd like to bring you up-to-date on this issue sometime shortly before you leave, by telephone or in person. Depending on developments, I may have something that should be communicated to the ministry of health at that time.

Thanks for your time and advice.

Sincerely yours,

Matthew Meselson

Enclosures: 1. Memorandum of 9/25/86  
2. Article from Chemical & Engineering News, 4/6/87