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Dr. Theodor Nemeč

SIPRI

International Institute for Peace and Conflict Research

Sveavagen 166

Stockholm Va, Sweden

Dear Theodor:

I am sorry to have taken so long in responding to your letter of February 26. The working paper on the BW inspection project seems excellent to me. Indeed, the only reservation I have concerns a single sentence, namely, the very first one. As you know I believe that the Geneva Protocol has been an extremely useful treaty and that its importance and authority for the future should always be emphasized in any discussions of CB warfare prevention. This is not to say that the Protocol should not be strengthened still further. Of course it should be. I emphatically agree with the concern voiced in the working paper that measures for strengthening the Protocol must be handled so as not to jeopardize its existing authority. My only comment is that one should not under-estimate or belittle that authority.

I enclose a copy of the manuscript I submitted to Steven Rose. You will find that it emphasizes general principles rather than specific measures although some of the latter are briefly discussed. Ratification by the United States and Japan is most important. I think there may be some hope for bringing the matter up here. However, this is mainly the business of U.S. citizens. But it could be made easier if other countries that have not yet acceded to the Protocol were now to do so. There are several countries in that situation and some of them might now be willing to act. It may be that some of you at SIPRI may be able to act as catalysts in this regard.

The effectiveness of the Protocol could be increased if the U.N. were to establish skeleton machinery for the investigation of allegations of CB warfare. This is mentioned in my paper and I know that you and others at SIPRI have considered this possibility. It might be worthwhile for SIPRI to commission a detailed draft proposal for the establishment of arrangements for the investigation of allegations. It might be best to propose several alternate arrangements. At some stage the proposals might be informally discussed with appropriate officials in several countries and with officials of the United Nations. As mentioned in my paper, it might be important to propose arrangements that would minimize political objections by avoiding any attempt to identify the user of chemical and biological weapons, concentrating instead on the problem of ascertaining whether or not such use had in fact occurred.

Regarding the SIPRI inspection project itself, you must have given considerable attention to the problem of bringing it to the point of political effectiveness. It may be too soon yet to attempt this. However, before too much longer the project should be put to some political use beyond mere public education and the gathering of technical information. Just what this could be I am not very certain. Have you explored the idea of a biological weapon-free zone? Several countries might agree not to work on such weapons or at least not to produce them. I realize that countries willing to participate in such an agreement are unlikely to manufacture biological weapons even in the absence of an agreement. However, the creation of BW-free zones could act as additional pressure on all nations to restrain themselves in the field of BW.

Another area for possible study is that concerning weapons tests. I believe that most epidemiologists would agree that there could be grave dangers in the large-scale testing of biological weapons, especially those containing viruses. A carefully prepared and properly circulated statement to this effect signed by eminent biologists might help to prevent such testing. I believe that this is an important matter. The context might be broadened by seeking a general international agreement calling for restraint in a variety of a

activities both military and otherwise that might effect the world-wide environment. Unusually large releases of certain chemicals might be placed under international control. The release of viruses and bacteria could be included. I am uneasy about the prospect of wide-spread spraying of polyhedral insect viruses as insecticides. A variety of international restraints can be envisaged. One of the mildest would be a United Nations study. Beyond that, one might consider requiring advance public notification of certain types of large-scale activity that might have environment changing potentials. Beyond that, prohibitions might be agreed upon in certain special areas. World-wide concern with pollution is beginning to be significant and may provide some opportunities for arms control as well as pollution control. A careful study might turn up some interesting possibilities.

I have written to my friend at the University of Koln in West Germany regarding the biological warfare inspection project. I will contact you when I hear from him.

Sincerely yours,

Matthew Meselson

MM/wb

P.S. You sent me, along with the SIPRI working paper, our old Pugwash BW Study Group Inspection Team paper entitled "Preamble", proposed by Heden, Learhoy, and the other members of the team. I suggest that paper be kept in your files and not circulated. It is a very Utopian document & tends to make our inspection studies much more naive than they are already!