

Goldman

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TO: Matthew Meselson
DATE: 10 November 1994
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Dear Dr. Meselson!

Sending you herewith a copy of Vil's letter to The New York Times editor. We hope it will be printed! Gale and I thought you would like to have this very wonderful written confirmation.

Hope to talk with you again soon!


Irene Goldman

To the editor:

I am writing now to clarify my position on the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). I have stated my views and would not like to have my words misunderstood by the scientific community, or misused by politicians in either Russia or the United States.

I am in favor of ratification of the CWC, as the important first step that must be taken on the road to ridding the world of chemical weapons. Although I am an idealist by nature. I am not an ideologue and do not subscribe to the slogan all or nothing. Certainly we cannot permit throwing out the baby with the bath water. It is important that the CWC be ratified quickly by both the U.S. and Russia, otherwise, nations will have no reason to give up their CW programs. Delay in treaty ratification would be a gift to the chemical generals.

The important first step of CWC ratification must be taken. Subsequently, we should strengthen the regime of chemical disarmament by taking the following steps: Establish a forum to which scientists can address their present and future concerns. Russia for its part should gather the well-intentioned and well-informed to assure the proper oversight of potential hotspots. In Russia, there are people who, in my opinion, have the necessary scientific authority and are capable of forwarding these ideas toward a satisfactory resolution of the concerns.

The US and other Western countries must demonstrate their seriousness of intent by helping make it possible for Russia to comply with the CWC. In this respect, sufficient financial and technological resources should be committed, and an understanding exhibited that the countries involved will push to have the original deadlines for destruction of CW stocks extended, as provided for under the Convention.

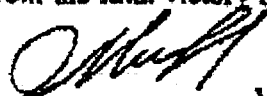
Also, treaty compliance in Russia should be strengthened by revising the lists of chemical substances prohibited for export to include the binary weapons and their precursors.

I am a specialist in my field, fully informed about the problems of CW as a professional. As was mentioned in the excellent Op/Ed piece by David Wise titled "Novichok on Trial", that appeared in the New York Times on 12 March, 1994, my sense of civic duty led me to speak out and take the consequences. My actions have been based on my own independent perception of the problems and my desire to rid humankind of these weapons of mass destruction for all time.

I am deeply grateful for the active and real support of individuals and the scientific and human rights communities, here and abroad. I am certain today, that without this support it is unlikely that the repression directed against me would have stopped.

In light of this, I would not want my individual points of view on the issues of chemical weapons to become a tool for political discord, that would remove us, the true opponents of weapons of mass destruction, from the final victory over the evil that is chemical weaponry.

Sincerely yours,



Vil Mirzayanov