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June 2, 2015

Amanda Peery  
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Harvard University Press  
79 Garden Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138-1400

Dear Ms. Peery,

This is in response to your request of March 23 for a report on John Moon's MS "The American Biological Warfare Program."

Publication of this work would be a valuable contribution to the scholarly literature on the subject but only if the MS is restructured to focus more clearly on the subject indicated by the title and revised and enhanced to deal more adequately with the important evolution of US policy from the early 1960s to 1969/70 during which modest official support for having an offensive BW program gave way to seeing BW weapons as not militarily useful for the US and even counterproductive, culminating in their renunciation by President Richard Nixon in 1969/70. The present account and documentation of this evolution and of the factors that brought it about is conspicuously brief in comparison to several other topics of less historical importance and less relevance to the subject of the MS. Further, the account is weakened by being interspersed with other topics in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

The comments that follow are organized around the questions listed in your letter.

1. What is the argument of the manuscript? The MS has no explicit argument. Its Prelude and 10 chapters consist mainly of a narrative account of events historically arranged and interspersed with the author's comments. The MS should not be judged as advancing a specific overall argument but rather as to whether it is an accurate and appropriately complete narrative of significant events in the origin, conduct, evaluation and termination of the American biological warfare program--adequately supported by citations to primary sources.

2. How does the projected book fit into current trends in the literature? Nothing about the American biological (and chemical) warfare program published in recent years approaches the wide scope attempted in the present MS. If suitably restructured and revised, the book would be a worthwhile addition to the literature about the US BW program and its termination, going beyond such recent publications as:

Jonathan Tucker, 2002. "A Farewell to Germs". *International Security* 27:107-148. A brief account of some of the principal events leading to the 1969 and 1970 decisions of President Nixon to renounce biological and toxin weapons.

Judith Miller, William Broad & Stephen Engelberg, 2002. "Biological Weapons and America's Secret War". Simon & Schuster, 416 pp. An account, in journalistic style, of actual and potential BW threats and the US response to them.

Jeanne Guillemin, 2005. "Biological Weapons". Columbia University Press, 258 pp. A primer suitable for classroom use that traces the development of biological weapons in the US and elsewhere, the US decision to renounce them, and international measures to ban them.

John Moon, 2006. "The US Biological Weapons Program" in "Deadly Cultures", Harvard University Press, 37 pp. A brief account of which the present MS is an expansion. It could serve as a useful template in restructuring the present MS, removing or moving to appendices those parts of the MS that interrupt and distract from the main narrative.

In addition, there are several books that deal with particular topics more thoroughly and at greater length than is attempted in the present MS. Some of these are:

Jeanne Guillemin 1999. Anthrax. University of California Press, 321 pp. An account of the outbreak of anthrax in the Soviet city of Sverdlovsk and the investigation that showed its source to be a military biological facility in that city.

Brian Balmer 2001. Britain and Biological Warfare. Palgrave, 246 pp. A history of the British biological weapons program.

David Zierler 2011. The Invention of Ecocide. University of Georgia Press, 245 pp. An account of the military use of herbicides in Viet Nam based on the author's doctoral dissertation. Not cited in the present MS.

David Willman 2011. The Mirage Man. Bantam Books, 448 pp. An account of the anthrax letter attacks of 2001.

Jeanne Guillemin 2011. American Anthrax. Henry Holt, 290 pp. An account of the anthrax letter attacks of 2001.

Donald Avery 2013. Pathogens for War. University of Toronto Press, 410 pp. A history of the Canadian biological warfare program.

3. For what audience is it written? With its discussion of specific weapons programs and policy deliberations and debates, together with citations to primary sources, the MS would be of interest to specialist readers.

4. Does it advance a scholarly argument or shed light on a current debate? The MS adds considerable detail to previous accounts and provides citations to many documents not cited elsewhere. If appropriately restructured and revised, it would be a valuable addition to the history of the US BW program. It does not clearly advance a scholarly argument or shed light on a current debate.

5. Is it an original contribution? Largely yes.

6. How does the book compare and contrast with the work of other scholars? Although there is overlap with other works on specific aspects of the subject, no recent work attempts to cover so wide a field.

7. How crucial a book might this be and why? The eventual book would be valuable as a compendium and a source of citations to primary documentation, not as a crucial contribution to a current debate.

8. Might the book, now or in time, be useful as a text for a course? Yes, as one of several references for a specialized course but not as a principal text on which a course could be based.

9. Does it need major or minor revisions in organization, writing style, presentation of the argument, or general research base? Much of the MS is a valuable contribution to the historical narrative of what the title implies: "The American Biological Warfare Program." But this is obscured by entire chapters and sections not directly related to the topic defined by the title and by the frequent interpolation of unnecessary and sometimes simplistic comments by the author. As an example of the former, Chapter 1, "Challenges of War and Disease, Ethics and Technology," taking up some 60 pages at the start of the main text but only tangentially related to the American BW Program should be shortened and moved to an appendix.

It would make similar sense to end the main text with Chapter 8, "The End of the U.S. Biological Warfare Offensive Program: 1969-1975" followed by a new section, possibly a short chapter, saying what the author believes to have been learned from the foregoing history of the US BW program.

All of the remaining material, consisting of Chapter 9: "The Challenge of BW Proliferation: 1973-2001", Chapter 10: "The Challenge of BW Terrorism: 2001" and the Epilogue should be reviewed for relevance to the title of the MS, moved to appendices and perhaps shortened.

Eight pages of "conclusions" are presented at the end of Chapter 10. Chapter 7 has 4 pages, Chapter 1 has 1.5 pages, Chapters 4, 5 and 8 each have half a page, Chapters 6 and 9 each have a quarter-page, and Chapters 2 and 3 have no conclusion. Uniform criteria should be devised and applied to the presentation of conclusions at the end of each chapter.

End notes should be designated with Arabic numerals, not Roman numerals. The retention of Roman numerals throughout makes me ask if the MS was examined by anyone at HUP before sending it out for review.

Finally, after it is restructured and revised, the entire MS, including the endnotes should be subjected to a thorough fact check.

Sincerely,

