

December 12, 1966

Mr. Örjan Berner
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Dear Örjan:

It is a great pleasure to receive letters bearing the SIPRI letter head. I am not sure at what point birth congratulations are in order - probably a long time ago - but anyway let me add mine. Incidentally, how can I put to constructive purposes the knowledge that you Check Account is No. 3001 1034629?

After a very long delay, I have sent Björnerstedt a draft estimate of the feasibility of remote detection of biological weapons field tests. The result is inconclusive. Subject to more accurate specification of certain factors, remote detection along the lines I have considered could turn out to be either quite possible or, alternatively, not at all possible. A small meeting of experts probably could produce a better estimate and some idea of how and when the uncertainties can be resolved. I believe the project should be pursued and I urge that SIPRI sponsor an appropriate meeting.

I would like to suggest an additional problem in the BC area for possible SIPRI study. The question is what would be the likely results of wide spread introduction of non-lethal chemical and/or biological weapons into warfare? Would lives be saved? Would escalation to the use of lethal weapons be likely? What political effects of importance if any would the wide spread use of non-lethal weapons bring about?

In my opinion the future of CB weapons is likely to depend on what various nations think the answers to these questions are. I have tried to consider the likely effects of non-lethal CB weapons in the light of what I know about the characteristics of the weapons and what combat experience has already occurred. My opinion at present is that the view, which is rather wide

spread in certain quarters, that non-lethal B and/or C can make war more humane is very difficult to substantiate. Indeed, there are strong reasons to think that the introduction of non-lethals could, on average, make war more lethal and less discriminating. Next time we meet I would like to pursue this subject further.

Thank you for the Hungarian Draft Resolution. I would greatly appreciate receiving any transcripts of the ensuing discussions, if you should have them.

With best regards,

Matthew Meselson