

December 12, 1966

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Dear Rolf:

Your letter dated November 7 reached me only last week, even-though it was posted November 11! I enclose a draft on the possibility of detecting remote field tests of biological weapons. It has taken me a long time to make contact with appropriate investigators and to find and familiarize myself with some of the literature. Even so, you will see that I have not been able to reach anything like a final conclusion. The uncertainties are very great as you very probably already realized. However, the uncertainties can be defined with reasonable precision and I see no technical reason why they cannot be resolved. At this time I cannot estimate how large an effort would be required to obtain the necessary information. Much research is now going on regarding deposition, cloud travel and diffusion, and airborne micro-organisms. It may be that considerable progress can be made simply by bringing together several persons involved in these different fields.

At present my attitude is that long range test detection may be possible, and that SIPRI should organize a small meeting before long to attempt to resolve some of the uncertainties. If you like, I could suggest some persons over here who could contribute.

The enclosed paper is only a draft. I may revise it after seeing some additional data I am hoping to receive. I am not sure whether or not SIPRI wishes me to consider the paper their property or my own. If the former, I am perfectly willing to refrain from distributing copies myself. Otherwise, I would like to send copies to a few persons for their information and comment. Please let me know rather soon what I should do in this regard.

Concerning the paper by Tammelin, I am in agreement that "SIPRI should study and carefully consider what positive effects can be obtained from an internationalization of research on automatic warning equipment." As you will see in my paper, I believe that there could be negative effects as well. I am glad to see that Tammelin has touched on this possibility also.

I have written to Berner with a suggestion for an additional SIPRI study in the BC area. Briefly, it is concerned with the problem of predicting the consequences of the wide spread introduction of non-lethal BC weapons into combat. I would appreciate it if you would take a look at the proposal and let me know your opinion on its suitability as a research problem. I imagine it would have elements similar to some of the kinds of operations research you have done in the past.

With best wishes,

Matthew Meselson