

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

4 November 1969

Professor Matthew Meselson
Biology Department
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass 02138

Dear Matt,

I was truly sorry I could not accept your invitation to attend the session on CWBW at the American Academy a few weeks ago because I had a conflicting meeting in New York that day. At the recent Pugwash meeting at Sochi in the USSR I saw a copy of the yellow covered book containing the proceedings of your meeting which was in the hands of a member of SIPRI named Perry-Robinson. I would like very much to have a chance to read the book again more slowly and would be grateful if you could have a copy sent to me. I have enormous admiration for the very constructive and effective work you have been doing in this area and hope that it does some good. The Russians at the Pugwash meeting seemed quite enthusiastic about a total ban on CBW but were rather unenthusiastic about separating the two. It may be that they would agree to a ban on BW but the word "inspection", as always, was unacceptable to them. They came up with a rather peculiar counter-offer which I will quote from my memory because I don't have the official documents here. As you know, the documents of the Pugwash conference are generally not for quotation in the newspapers except for the summary statement put out by the Continuing Committee at the end of the conference. Anyway, their counter-offer was to propose some sort of a "nonproliferation treaty" which would have required that no nation allow stockpiles of its CBW weapons in existence now to be maintained outside its own borders. They also had provisions about not encouraging or helping in the manufacture and stockpiling or of development of weapons outside their own borders. I think the main point of this counter suggestion was to require us to withdraw herbicides and tear gas from Vietnam and especially stockpiles of CBW that might be stationed in Western Europe. Since the balance of terror in Western Europe is to some extent maintained by a balance in stockpiles of chemical weapons I would think that a nonproliferation treaty of this sort would be very much to our disadvantage in maintaining a military balance which hopefully remains a stalemate; that is, if the Russians in some imagined military move in Europe on the ground were to be able to force us to fight in rubber suits but we were not able to force them to do the same that would alter the military balance somewhat. Anyhow, those Russians who were in a Working Group on chemical and biological warfare did seem anxious to press for a total abolition of development, manufacture, stockpilings of all such weapons. The tricky question already pointed out in your yellow book involves the military use of weapons which are somehow acceptable for civilian use such as herbicides in agriculture and tear gas in riot control. I am sure you will soon have a full set of the working documents from Group IV which considered these questions either from Paul Doty or Bernie Feld.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Donald A. Glaser