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Professor Joshua Lederberg
Rockefeller University
1230 York Ave.
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Dear Professor Lederberg:

It was a great pleasure to see and hear you again at the UN Seminar in March on Biological Weapons and the need and efforts for adding a Protocol or other amendments to the Biological Weapons Convention. Your talk about improving the effectiveness of the BWC recalled to my mind your statement in August 1970 to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (the successor body of the Eighteen Nation Committee on Disarmament and predecessor of the current Conference on Disarmament). At that time the Committee was discussing the provisions of a draft treaty on BW.

The Committee wanted to abolish BW as a weapon of warfare, but it was moving forward slowly, mainly because of the problem of the difficulty of ensuring any effective or adequate

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means of verifying compliance with any treaty banning all BW. The Committee was faced with a real problem that appeared to be impossible of solution.

After hearing your learned and eloquent statement of the potential dangers of BW and your hint that any important program to develop any large-scale stocks of such weapons would inevitably become known, the Committee was encouraged to proceed with the drafting of a BW treaty. It went ahead with only an appeal to the UN Security Council to deal with any violations of the Treaty and finally produced the BW Convention which was opened for signature in April 1972.

As we discussed after your talk last month, it seems clear that both of us believe that it will require what is sometimes called "societal verification" – by authorizing "whistle-blowers" to report any breaches or violations ~~of an effect~~ as a means of effective verification. (I think we also agree that only the creation of a system of societal verification (or verification by the people) could ensure that nuclear weapons can be banned and eliminated.

I wish you could develop and publicize your views both for a Protocol to the BWC and for a treaty to ban & eliminate all nuclear weapons.

All best wishes. Bill Epstein.