

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL
2101 Constitution Avenue Washington, D.C. 20418

September 25, 1985

Dear:

On behalf of the Committee on International Security and Arms Control (CISAC) of the National Academy of Sciences, I am writing to invite you to participate in a one-day ad hoc discussion to help advise us in preparation for further discussions between a subgroup of our committee and a counterpart Soviet group on issues relating to biological weapons. Please allow me to provide you with some background information before going into the particulars of the meeting.

CISAC was created in 1980 to bring to bear the scientific and technical talent of the US scientific community on problems associated with international security and arms control. The committee, which has a rotating membership of distinguished scientists and experts in the security field, conducts a variety of activities including studies, seminars for the Academy membership, and discussions with similar organizations in other countries.

One of the principal activities of CISAC has been a continuing program of private bilateral meetings on issues of international security and arms control with a comparable group representing the Soviet Academy of Sciences. CISAC is currently chaired by Dr. Wolfgang Panofsky, Director Emeritus of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. The Soviet group is chaired by Academician Evgeniy Velikhov, Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

At the seventh meeting of our two groups in Moscow last June, the topic of biological weapons proliferation was introduced as a new agenda item. Because the topic was new and few of the American and Soviet participants were very knowledgeable on the topic, the exchange took the unusual form of a short tutorial given by CISAC member Dr. Joshua Lederberg, President of Rockefeller University, who is expert in this area. Following the tutorial, a discussion with the Soviets ensued focussed on two items: Sverdlovsk and the need for adequate exchange of scientific information on this incident to ensure that the cooperative clauses of the BW Treaty are being fully complied with, and the danger of BW proliferation which both sides agreed should be an area of great concern to both countries, particularly in the light of rapid advances in genetic engineering and biotechnology.

Given interest on both sides to continue the dialogue on BW, and recognition that neither group has the level of expertise necessary for fruitful in-depth discussions, it was agreed to set up joint expert panels under CISAC to meet biannually, separately from the CISAC biannual meetings.

Dr. Lederberg has agreed to chair the CISAC panel. Before establishing an agenda with the Soviets and deciding on the composition of the CISAC panel, it would be very useful to call together an ad hoc group of US experts to discuss the issues and to advise on objectives and means in CISAC's future discussions on BW with the Soviets. Attached is a letter from Joshua Lederberg to me outlining his views on some of the topics to be discussed at the meeting.

We hope you can accept our invitation to attend this meeting planned for October 18, 1985 in Washington at the Joseph Henry Building of the National Academy of Sciences, 2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. The meeting will be held in room 355 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Academy will cover your expenses. Please phone Lynn Rusten at 202-334-2811 to let us know as promptly as possible whether you can attend. If you have further questions about the meeting, you can reach Joshua Lederberg at 212-570-8080, me at 202-334-2800, or Lynn Rusten at the number above.

Sincerely,

Victor Rabinowitch
Director
Committee on International Security
and Arms Control

Attachment