

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

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Attention ~~MRS MULLETT~~  
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December 23, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Signing Ceremony for the Convention on Biological Weapons

We should begin planning for the signature ceremony for the Biological Weapons Convention (Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction) which was negotiated this year at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) in Geneva.

On December 16 the General Assembly of the United Nations approved, by a vote of 110-0-1, a resolution commending the Convention and requesting the depositary governments (US, UK, USSR) to open the Convention for signature and ratification at the earliest possible date. Following the procedure used last year in the case of the Seabed Arms Control Treaty, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the Department would plan to have the Convention signed by the chief negotiator of the Convention, Ambassador James F. Leonard, and me. The ambassadors of the UK, the Soviet Union and other ambassadors accredited to the United States would sign for their respective countries.

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ACDA/IR Van Heumen

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Also following last year's procedure, we propose to arrange, in consultation with the UK and the Soviet Union, for signing ceremonies to be held on the same date in Washington, London and Moscow. The ceremonies could be held sometime in early February, prior to the reconvening of the CCD on February 29. The Soviets also suggest this timing. This would provide time in January for other countries to get ready and lay the basis for a good turnout at the signing ceremony. It would be useful to propose to the UK and the Soviet Union a choice of specific dates, such as February 1, February 3 or February 8.

Early this year you participated in the signing of the Seabed Arms Control Treaty at the Department of State on February 11. The BW Convention stems from your decision to renounce all biological weapons and to work for a treaty prohibiting such weapons. Your participation at the signing ceremony in Washington would therefore be highly appropriate and would provide the opportunity for you to make a brief statement. The ceremony would not last more than about half an hour.

The ceremony might be held in the White House. This was done in the case of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Alternatively, the ceremony could be held in the international conference room of the Department of State, as was the case when the Seabed Arms Control Treaty was signed. While the BW Convention is unquestionably a noteworthy achievement, it does not rank in importance with the NPT and a ceremony in the State Department would therefore seem to be the most appropriate.

As soon as we know whether you are planning to participate and have an indication which dates would be convenient, we will coordinate with the British and Soviets to reach firm agreement on a date. If you plan to attend, we will at a later time provide further information and suggestions about the ceremony, as well as suggested speaking points for your remarks.

Recommendations

1. That, particularly given your identification with this issue, you participate in the signing ceremony of the BW Convention.
2. That the White House indicate alternative dates for the ceremony so that we can work out an agreed date with the British and Soviet governments.
3. That the signing ceremony be held in the Department of State.

  
William P. Rogers

Clearances:

L - Mr. Stevenson  
IO - Mr. De Palao  
S/CPA - Mr. M. Schacher  
PM - Mr. Spiers'

ACDA/IR:MvonHeuven:ch:12/22/71