

**TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS,
Comrade M. S. GORBACHEV**

In accordance with your instructions, I am reporting on the subject of *biological* weapons.

Our information indicates that the USA possessed this type of weapon immediately after World War II. By the time the Convention was signed in 1972, they had commissioned ten *biological* recipes developed in special research centers, and also 35 types of munitions for using these substances.

In our country the development of *biological* weapons began in the 1950s at three USSR Defense Ministry organizations, located in Kirov, Zagorsk, and Sverdlovsk. In 1971 they were joined in this work by another 12 organizations of the USSR Ministry of the Medical Industry and the former USSR State Agroindustrial Committee. By 1985 they had developed 12 recipes and means for using them. These were produced in suitable quantities, stored, and destroyed after the expiration of useful life (an average of 6 months).

The international Biological Weapons Convention was signed in 1972 and ratified by the USSR and USA in 1975. However, the Convention had no effective inspection mechanism for ensuring compliance, nor was there a precise definition of the difference between developing biological weapons and defensive means against them. According to some data, the NATO countries took advantage of the situation to engage in intensive development and production of especially aggressive biological infectious agents. Some of this work is being done on the territory of third countries that had not signed the Convention.

Forced to respond, our country also carried out such work until 1989.

However, because of significant progress in negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention, which provided for inspection of any facility, including biological facilities, and the possible implementation of international inspection to monitor compliance with the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, the USSR Central Committee decreed on October 6, 1989, that all research capacity for developing *biological* weapons be redirected and used to develop defensive means against these weapons so as not to contradict our international obligations.

In 1988 the stocks of special recipes were destroyed, production of active materials at industrial facilities was halted, and special processing and munitions-assembly equipment was dismantled.

On December 6, 1989, the USSR CPSU Central Committee decided that eight biological research and production facilities of the USSR Ministry of Medical Industry be prepared for international inspection by July 1, 1990.

On March 16, 1990, the USSR CPSU Central Committee decided that three similar facilities of the USSR Defense Ministry and four facilities of the USSR Council of Ministers State Commission for Provisions and Procurements be prepared for inspection by January 1, 1991.

Three research facilities, in Obolensk (Moscow Region), Novosibirsk, and Leningrad, are currently being prepared for international inspection, as well as industrial facilities in Omutninsk (Kirov Region), Berdsk (Novosibirsk Region), Stepnogorsk (Tselinograd Region), Kurgan, and Penza. Biological facilities of the USSR Defense Ministry and the USSR Council of Ministers State Commission for Provisions and Procurements are being prepared for international inspection after January 1, 1991, as stipulated in the USSR Central Committee resolution.

It is possible that some Western circles have a heightened interest in our country's compliance with the 1972 Convention after the defection of V. A. Pasechnik in France in October 1989. Pasechnik, who was General Director of scientific-industrial organization Farmpribor, which is located in Leningrad and under the USSR Ministry of the Medical Industry, had knowledge of the content of special biological research work, as well as the locations of organizations involved in this work.

However, any possible leak of information by Pasechnik, who is a narrow specialist, will not cause major damage in revealing our scientific and technical achievements in this field, but might provide a basis for western countries to question the Soviet Union's compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention.

It should be noted that under the 1972 Convention, our country in 1988–1990 gave the United Nations a complete list of the names and locations of 17 facilities that handle high-risk infectious materials, including facilities developing defensive means against biological weapons. At the same time, the USA disclosed only six such facilities, although some data indicate there are far more than that.

If the issue arises of visiting each other's biological facilities in order to lessen concerns about their activity, we could propose that the Americans visit facilities in Kirov, Novosibirsk, and Obolensk. In return, the Soviet specialists should visit the Baker Laboratory at Dugway Army Proving Ground, the National Toxicology Center (Pine Bluff, Arkansas), and Cetus Corporation (Amityville, California), which were not on the list of biological facilities that the USA declared to the UN.

L. Zaikov

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