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5/30/93

Dear Bess—

We had an interesting meeting with the CISAC/Russians. I'll get you a full transcript later.

Of most immediate interest: Sandachshier expressed some exasperation with us: "You already know everything that was happening with Vector (Biopreparat)[a]. What more do you want us to tell you. Three defectors — the named Pecelnik, Abilenko*, and ___? [head of the 3d Directorate] — have gone around told you everything". We said we were not an investigative body and that investigating the past was really their responsibility. We needed to know whether (1) we now shared a common interest in bringing possible violations under control and (2) could then proceed with shared mutual trust and confidence.

Petrov said that, speaking for the Russian Academy, we did share those interests, and their academy would join with ours in a joint study of pathogenesis of anthrax, and whether any unusual strains were involved in Sverdlovsk. He could not promise cooperation of the military. That would need [pressure] at higher levels, perhaps military-to-military discussion. Petrov said that many Academy institutes had received military funding, but never for biological weapons. The withdrawal of that funding is one of the Academy's financial problems today.

* who, he said, is in N.Y.

So with the help of Pacesetter and others, there is a new level of candor, and academy-to-academy we can proceed without so many unspeakable secrets.

Jo Husbands is preparing a detailed transcript.

Yours,

J

Biopresent

(a) S- did claim that their funding collapsed in 1989 and wanted us to believe that Yeltsin's "confession" about March 1992 was made under pressure and to "give a bone to the wolves". He could not claim to know everything about the military installations.