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The Editor
The Boston Globe
135 William T. Morrissey Blvd.
Dorchester, Massachusetts

Your article "Who's Right about Yellow Rain?" (Globe, July 4) did a valuable public service in presenting the arguments gathered by Professor Meselson in favor of a simple biological explanation of the "yellow rain" in Southeast Asia, the presence of fungal toxins on forest leaves.

While our Government used flimsy evidence to heat up the Cold War once again by accusing the Soviet Union of perpetrating banned biological warfare, Meselson has performed the proper function of a scientist, analyzing data and examining more reasonable, less politically motivated alternatives.

Dr. Meselson is said to have been the inspiration behind President Nixon's 1969 decision to renounce biological weapons unilaterally. One year later in Mexico City Dr. Roger Porter and I, former presidents of the American Society for Microbiology, were the U.S. delegates to the international panel on biological warfare. It was our privilege to use the momentum of President Nixon's initiative to draft a unanimously accepted resolution to ban biological weapons. This resolution was later unanimously adopted by the United Nations.

It seems irresponsible for officials and for their microbiologically untrained advisors to use what can at best be considered suggestive evidence to unleash a campaign of vilification, adding to the strain of international relations. As a professional microbiologist I find Dr. Meselson's arguments intriguing enough to advise utmost restraint instead of irresponsible spouting about Soviet violations.



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