

Possible Comments on BW

I. A line of argument used by the nonaligned countries against the US position is that BW is not a significant military threat, that CW is a more important weapons system, and that by agreeing to ban BW only the opportunity may be lost to solve the more pressing problem of CW control. Also, many of the non-aligned countries cannot understand how any state would wish to develop or use BW in view of the dangers involved.

Possible Comment

a. General Themes - By virtue of your background, you speak with personal expert knowledge when you conclude that the continued development of biological weapons could put the very future of human life on earth in serious peril. You could describe recent major developments in molecular genetics, e.g., the artificial replication of a virus DNA, to support your conclusion that such discoveries point to the development of biological agents against which no reasonable defense can be mounted. You could discuss your concern that developments in micro-biology will be used in engineering BW agents, thus distorting scientific research. Description of potential BW agents and their effects, particularly on civilian populations would be effective.

b. BW as a Credible Military Threat

You could describe the danger of BW proliferation that might result from a desire on the part of a government to acquire a weapon of mass destruction relatively cheaply. A BW capability is within the reach of many nations today. The arguments in Ambassador Leonard's CCD speech of April 21 that certain biological weapons could in fact be used either for a massive first use attack or for a sabotage weapon could also be developed.

c. Dangers of Developing BW

You could describe the dangers involved even in BW testing and storage. You might point out that BW testing and development will only lead to further proliferation of BW technology.

d. Dangers of the Use of BW

You might emphasize the unknown and potentially catastrophic consequences of the use of BW, e.g., pandemics,

development of mutant forms of viruses, etc., and the huge public health problems which would be created as a result of the use of BW. The effects of the Black Death and Marburg virus could be used as examples of what could happen, as well as the introduction of yellow fever into China.

II. Toxins - Significance of Their Inclusion in UK Convention

a. Possible Comment

You could review the nature and source of toxins, the role of toxins in causing disease, both infectious and non-infectious, the great potency of toxins, and their possible military utility. You might describe the reasons why toxins from an arms control viewpoint are best included in a BW convention, e.g., their method of production, that toxins cause disease, etc.,. You might develop the reasons why toxins have been so interesting for military researchers, e.g., potency, logistical ease of delivery, possibility of immunizing attacking forces, etc.

III. The USSR has argued that C and B weapons have always been treated together in the military, scientific, and political context and that any attempt to treat BW separately would undermine the effectiveness of the Geneva Protocol. Specifically the Soviets argue that: 1. Science traditionally has treated C and B weapons as a single issue, e.g., in the UN SYG Report and in the WHO Report. 2. From the military point of view, the characteristic features of both C and B weapons are that they exercise their effects exclusively on living tissue; the methods of their delivery are largely similar; and both weapons can be used tactically and strategically. 3. C and B have been treated as one political question, e.g., in the Geneva Protocol and in resolution 2603, sections A and B, adopted at the last UNGA session. It would be unjustified to assume a different approach to the problem of the complete prohibition of C and B weapons.

Possible Comment Themes

1. The UN SYG report makes several distinctions between C and B weapons. Furthermore BW, unlike CW can produce

after-effects that can rebound against the user through a biological chain reaction. Chemical weapons, however potent, do not produce equally or more virulent offspring.

2. CW and BW both affect living tissue but BW weapons alone can continue to spread unpredictably and indefinitely. CW and BW can be delivered by similar methods but the enormous logistic burdens involved in their massive use would prevent employment of CW over the vast areas which could be attacked with BW. CW produces immediate effects, unlike BW, which is an important quality for use in tactical combat situations. Finally CW has been used in warfare while BW has not.

(don't agree.)

IV. An argument frequently raised by the Communist and non-aligned countries is that a comprehensive ban on BW only might be construed as meaning CW is accepted as a weapon and that its development, production, and stockpiling would be condoned.

Possible Comment

making CW "accepted" makes "accepted" .. ?

You might indicate that you are well aware of the dangers posed by CW and that you favor controls on CW. It is difficult, however, to see how an agreement to ban BW could be construed as a sanction to develop and stockpile CW. BW has a different military role than CW and therefore an increase in the development or stockpiling of CW could not be a substitute for BW. You might add that the US is not now producing any chemical agents for stockpile.

small country deterrence?

Take advantage of their reluctance to negotiate a NAT restriction!