NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL
2101 Constitution Avenue Washington, D.C. 20418

THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY
MAR 24 1997

March 20, 1997

To -- Members of NAS/IOM Committee on U.S.-Russian Collaboration in Research on Dangerous Pathogens

From -- Glenn Schweitzer, Jo Husbands, Chris Howson

Subject -- Update on Recent Activities

This memorandum brings you up to date on activities that are underway as a result of discussions at the February 6-7, Committee meeting.

The Six Initial Projects

Enclosed are the final work plans for the six projects the Committee approved for funding during the initial phase of the program. All recommended American collaborators have expressed readiness to participate, and we hope to launch these projects in the near future.

Peter Jahrling, Jim Leduc, and Matt Meselson have prepared support statements for each of the proposed initial projects at the request of the Department of Defense. The statements are enclosed along with the list of criteria for project selection established at the Committee meeting.

Also, the enclosed notes on several meetings involving NAS staff and several Committee members indicate some of the administrative problems we still face before the projects can begin.

International Coordination

As indicated in the notes, staff met with a representative from the EU and briefed him on our activities. He was very supportive of our efforts and suggested an early meeting with us, and possibly with Japanese specialists, to consider selection criteria for biology projects in order to avoid funding, by any of the interested parties, of inappropriate projects in Russia. We are considering a visit to Brussels in response to his suggestion for coordination.

Roundtable To Obtain Russian Input for Long-Term Plan

As we discussed at the Committee meeting, a roundtable discussion is being organized by Biopreparat involving significant representatives of the Russian scientific community to discuss the long-term plan. We anticipate that the two-day session will be held on the outskirts of Moscow in late April. We are currently discussing the agenda with Biopreparat; a copy of a preliminary draft is attached. Also attached is the list of American participants.

Workshop To Review Russian Proposals for Cooperative Research

We are taking steps to organize a workshop in Russia in late June, under the umbrella of the International Science and Technology Center in Moscow, to discuss proposals for research projects which Russian specialists have developed. As indicated in the attached preliminary agenda for the workshop, we anticipate involvement of specialists from the Russian Ministry of Defense. As soon as the administrative arrangements are worked out, we will inform you so that you can consider participating.

Additional Initiatives in the Immediate Future

In response to the expressed interest of DOD regarding activities which could be very important for the long-term success of this project and implemented in the immediate future, we have sent the enclosed letter to DOD. The letter identifies eight types of activities that would help set the stage for long-term collaboration. As soon as we receive a reply from DOD, we will seek your advice on next steps.

Should you have any questions or suggestions concerning any of the foregoing activities, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Attachments:

Project List
Work Plans for Six Pilot Projects
Project Justifications
Summary of Meetings
Agenda for Biopreparat Roundtable
Agenda for NAS-ISTC Workshop
Letter to DOD
February Trip Report