Fig. 1.1. Department of Defense Appropriations Hearings for 1970 on the Development of Immune-System Destroying Agents for Biological Warfare

SOVIET CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

Mr. SIKES. The statements indicate that the Soviets have made extensive progress in chemical and biological weapons. I would like you to provide for the record a statement which shows what they are doing in this area and with some indication of their capabilities in this area.

Mr. POOR. We will be happy to provide that.

(The information follows:)

The Soviet Union is better equipped defensively, offensively, militarily, and psychologically for chemical and biological warfare than any other nation in the world. She has placed a great deal of emphasis on these systems in her military machine. Utilizing a wide spectrum of chemical munitions, the Soviets consider that chemical tactical weapons would be used in conjunction with nuclear weapons or separately, as the case may dictate. The Soviet agent stockpiles include a variety of agents and munitions capable of creating a wide range of effects on the battlefield. The Soviet soldier is well equipped defensively. He trains vigorously and for long periods of time utilizing his equipment. He looks upon chemical as a real possibility in any future conflict, and respects his protective equipment. The research program in the Soviet Union for chemical warfare and biological agents has encompassed every facet from incapacitating to lethal effects, both offensively and defensively.

(Additional classified information was supplied to the committee [including the testimony below].)

SYNTHETIC BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

There are two things about the biological agent field I would like to mention. One is the possibility of technological surprise. Molecular biology is a field that is advancing very rapidly and eminent biologists believe that within a period of 5 to 10 years it would be possible to produce a synthetic biological agent, an agent that does not naturally exist and for which no natural immunity could have been acquired.

Mr. SIKES. Are we doing any work in that field?

Dr. MACARTHUR. We are not.

Mr. SIKES. Why not? Lack of money or lack of interest?

Dr. MACARTHUR. Certainly not lack of interest.

Mr. SIKES. Would you provide for our records information on what would be required, what the advantages of such a program would be, the time and the cost involved?

Dr. MACARTHUR. We will be very happy to.

(The information follows:)

The dramatic progress being made in the field of molecular biology led us to investigate the relevance of this field of science to biological warfare. A small group of experts considered this matter and provided the following observations:

1. All biological agents up to the present time are representatives of naturally occurring disease, and are thus known by scientists throughout the world. They are easily available to qualified scientists for research, either for offensive or defensive purposes.

2. Within the next 5 to 10 years, it would probably be possible to make a new infective microorganism which could differ in certain important aspects from any known disease-causing organisms. Most important of these is that it might be refractory to the immunological and therapeutic processes upon which we depend to maintain our relative freedom from infectious disease.

3. A research program to explore the feasibility of this could be completed in approximately 5 years at a total cost of $10 million.

4. It would be very difficult to establish such a program. Molecular biology is a relatively new science. There are not many highly competent scientists in the field, almost all are in university laboratories, and they are generally adequately supported from sources other than DOD. However, it was considered possible to initiate an adequate program through the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council (NAS-NRC).

5. The matter was discussed with the NAS-NRC and tentative plans were made to initiate the program. However, decreasing funds in CB, growing criticism of the CB program, and our reluctance to involve the NAS-NRC in such a controversial endeavor have led us to postpone it for the past 2 years.

It is a highly controversial issue and there are many who believe such research should not be undertaken lest it lead to yet another method of massive killing of large populations. On the other hand, without the sure scientific knowledge that such a weapon is possible, and an understanding of the ways it could be done, there is little that can be done to devise defensive measures. Should an enemy develop it there is little doubt that this is an important area of potential military technological inferiority in which there is no adequate research program.

The above testimony of Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research and Development, Charles L. Poor, was printed on page 79 of the public record cited below. However, Dr. MacArthur's above statements were deleted. Dr. MacArthur was, at the time, the deputy director of the Department of Defense. The complete testimony was found initially by military investigator Zears Miles and subsequently by attorney Theodore Strecker, J.D., through the Freedom of Information Act (on page 129 of the supplemental record). A copy of the original classified document was later published on page 124 of *Deadly Innocence* by this author in 1994. Source: Department of Defense Appropriations for 1970. Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations House of Representatives, Ninety-First Congress, Part 5 Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Dept. of the Army. Tuesday, July 1, 1969, page 79. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.