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November 14, 1960

My Lord:

As you undoubtedly know, Professors Rabinowitch, Glass and Brown recently took occasion to issue a statement disavowing any association with me. Professors Doty and Wiesner were active collaborators, although their names did not appear. The statement took the form of a letter to the editors of the New York Herald Tribune and the Washington Post, and purported to speak for all of the Pugwash scientists.

According to its authors, the letter was touched off by a press service dispatch that was almost entirely the invention of an irresponsible reporter. After gathering material on the State Department's refusal to permit Soviet scientists attending the Rochester conference on high-energy physics to come to Cleveland as my guests, the reporter wrote an article mainly concerned with the Pugwash Conferences, and started by falsely stating that I had announced that the next meeting would be held in Moscow. The article contained no quotations from me, and I naturally had nothing to do with the preparation of the headline that the New York Herald Tribune gave it.

These five American scientists are all thoroughly familiar with the practice of the American press of misreporting and distorting anything concerned with creating better understanding with the Soviets. As was to be expected, the newspapers of North America seized on the letter as the basis for prominent articles proclaiming that I was being denounced by the Pugwash scientists. Most of the articles made no reference to such kind statements as appeared in the letter, but they expanded at length on the theme that my efforts to create friendship with the Soviets were anathema to the scientists.

The five Americans, had they been true to scientific tradition, would have discussed the untrue press dispatch with me or my office before issuing a statement which a man of Professor Rabinowitch's experience with newspaper publicity knew would be twisted and exaggerated. They then would have been warranted in attacking the press service, but not me, for something I neither did nor said.

I have issued no statement to the press in response to the letter, and I believe that the entire incident is unimportant in comparison with the great task before us in building a peaceful world. I feel that I must mention the matter to you, however, so that you will know that I have not been a party to the mis-statements of which the five American scientists have irresponsibly accused me.

Sincerely yours,

Rt. Hon. Earl Russell
Plas Penrhyn
Penrhyndeudraeth
Merioneth, North Wales

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