June 2, 2023

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

The matter of antibiotic production is a national security issue with which you are quite familiar. I’m referring to the fact that almost no antibiotics are manufactured in the United States. U.S. drug companies have preferred to manufacture them largely in East Asia. You have resolved in past years to do something about this and to press the drug industry to produce more essential drugs inside the United States that are now imported.

What do you plan to do to start having antibiotics produced in the United States? During the Vietnam War, the second leading cause of hospitalization for U.S. soldiers was malaria. When the Pentagon learned that U.S. drug companies had no interest in researching and developing anti-malarial drugs or vaccines, it started its own government R&D through clinical trials at Walter Reed Army Hospital and Bethesda Naval Hospital. At a fraction of the cost that would have been imposed by the drug companies, the government employed doctors and other scientists developed three out of four of the major anti-malarial drugs then used in the world. You may wish to revisit this successful endeavor as a reference for what you may do to address this urgent matter.

I welcome your response.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph Nader

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