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THE PRESIDENT'S TALKING POINTS  
CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP MEETING  
(Tuesday, November 25, 1969)

1. Introduction

- We have just completed the most comprehensive review of our chemical and biological defense policies and programs ever undertaken.
- This was the first full study of the subject in over 15 years.
- When I took office I found objectives and policies in this field were unclear and programs were not well defined.
- I therefor ordered a full review.
- The Departments of State and Defense, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the Office of Science and Technology, the Intelligence Community and other agencies worked closely together for several months.
- They were assisted by the scientific community through the President's Scientific Advisory Committee.

2. NSC Consideration

- The NSC met last week to review these studies.
- Mr. Helms and General Wheeler gave informative briefings.
- Dr. Kissinger will outline the major issues (ask Dr. Kissinger to outline issues and considerations).
- Carefully weighing all national security considerations, I have arrived at a number of basic decisions.

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3. Biological Warfare

- The United States will renounce the use of lethal biological warfare.
- The U. S. will renounce the use of incapacitating biological warfare.
- The United States Biological Program will be confined to research and development for defensive purposes (immunization, safety measures, et cetera).
- The United States will associate itself with the principles and objectives of the United Kingdom Draft Convention Prohibiting the use of Biological Methods of Warfare.
- (The U.K. Draft Convention [submitted to the Eighteen National Disarmament Conference in Geneva, August 1969] would ban biological research for hostile purposes, and ban production, possession and use of biological methods of war.)
- This program not only will assure the strength of our defenses but it also will benefit all our people through research into better ways to control and prevent the spread of communicable disease.

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4. Chemical Warfare Program

- The United States will reaffirm its renunciation of the first use of lethal chemical weapons.
- We also will renounce the first use of incapacitating chemical weapons.
- But others have major programs for chemical weapons and means of delivery. (FYI: Soviet Union)
- Purposes of our chemical warfare program will be to deter any enemy from using chemicals against us, to protect against such an attack and, if ever necessary, to be able to respond in kind.
- The program we will pursue will provide the best possible deterrence against attack and the best possible defense if one should ever come.

5. Geneva Protocol

- In the spirit of these decisions, the Administration will submit the Geneva Protocol of 1925 to the Senate for its advice and consent to ratification.
- The Protocol bans the first use of chemical and biological methods of warfare.
- The United States always has supported its principles and objectives.

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- Over 80 other nations have ratified.
- We take this positive step to:
  - reinforce our many past statements
  - reinforce international constraints on use of these weapons.
- We do not consider that the Protocol prohibits the use of herbicides or those agents commonly referred to as tear gas or riot control agents and will so state.

6. Conclusion

- These decisions represent a peaceful initiative.  
I hope they will help us to improve international control of these weapons. They should make a major contribution to improved international understanding in this little known but important field. Our work has certainly improved our understanding of a subject which has before now been regarded with excessive suspicion because it was shrouded in rigid secrecy.
- I have made these decisions with confidence because they are based on a systematic and comprehensive review of the subject. This intensive study was conducted with the full participation of all the agencies in Government with related responsibilities.

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- In the process, we obtained the best judgments of experts both within and without the Government.
- The result of this study -- improved understanding and rational, confident decision-making -- illustrates the value of the National Security Council system which we have created.

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