The original documents are located in Box 5, folder “1/22/75 - Signing Ceremony: Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Biological Weapons Convention” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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SIGNING CEREMONY

GENEVA PROTOCOL OF 1925

AND

THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1975
I am signing today the instruments of ratification of two important treaties that limit arms and contribute to lessening the horror of war.

The first, the Geneva Protocol, prohibits the use in war of lethal and incapacitating chemical and bacteriological weapons. Its ratification completes a process which began nearly fifty years ago -- in 1925 -- when the United States proposed and signed the protocol.
THE UNITED STATES HAS ALWAYS OBSERVED THE PRINCIPLES AND
OBJECTIVES OF THE PROTOCOL. THE RATIFICATION TODAY
MARKS OUR FORMAL COMMITMENT. ALTHOUGH IT IS OUR
POSITION THAT THE PROTOCOL DOES NOT COVER RIOT CONTROL
AGENTS AND CHEMICAL HERBICIDES, I HAVE DECIDED THAT THE
UNITED STATES SHALL RENOUNCE THEIR USE IN WAR AS A MATTER
OF NATIONAL POLICY, EXCEPT IN A CERTAIN VERY LIMITED
NUMBER OF DEFENSE SITUATIONS WHERE LIVES CAN BE SAVED.
THIS POLICY IS DETAILED IN THE EXECUTIVE ORDER THAT IS
BEING ISSUED TODAY.
THE SECOND TREATY I AM SIGNING IS THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION, WHICH PROHIBITS THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.

IT IS THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT SINCE WORLD WAR TWO TO PROVIDE FOR THE ACTUAL ELIMINATION OF AN ENTIRE CLASS OF WEAPONS, NAMELY, BIOLOGICAL AGENTS AND TOXINS.
AS EVIDENCE OF OUR DEEP COMMITMENT TO THE OBJECTIVES
OF THIS BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION, WE HAVE ALREADY
DESTROYED OUR ENTIRE STOCKPILE OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN
AGENTS AND WEAPONS. OUR BIOLOGICAL WARFARE FACILITIES
HAVE BEEN CONVERTED TO PEACEFUL USES.
THE FINAL ACT IN THE PROCESS OF RATIFYING THIS
CONVENTION REQUIRES THE DEPOSIT OF THE INSTRUMENT OF
RATIFICATION IN WASHINGTON, LONDON AND MOSCOW,
WHICH WILL BE DONE WHEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND U.S.S.R.
COMPLETE THEIR RESPECTIVE RATIFICATION PROCEDURES.
FINALLY, I BELIEVE THAT THESE ACTS OF RATIFICATION
DEMONSTRATE THE DESIRE OF OUR NATION TO CREATE AND CONTRIBUTE
TO A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD. I PLEDGE TO YOU THAT I WILL
CONTINUE IN THE SEARCH FOR NEW MEASURES TO PROMOTE THAT
CAUSE.

END OF TEXT
CLEARANCE FORM FOR PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH MATERIAL

TO: THE PRESIDENT
VIA: ROBERT HARTMANN
FROM: PAUL A. THEIS
SUBJECT: Presidential statement at signing ceremony for the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Biological Weapons Convention

TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF PRESIDENTIAL USE: 12:30 p.m., Wednesday, January 22, 1975, the White House

SPEECHWRITER: NSC/State
EDITED BY: Theis/Casserly
BASIC RESEARCH/SPEECH MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY: NSC/State/Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

Cleared by (Please initial):

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