



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Paris, France

File CBW  
Craig Johnstone

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Dr. Matthew Meselson  
Professor of Biochemistry  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02831

Dear Matt:

I have been meaning to write for the past several weeks to bring to your attention the enclosed article which, I am sure, you have seen before. It was given to me by a Doctor Thomas Welch (Associate for Technology, Chemical Systems Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland) who is a strong believer in the need for us to produce and deploy binary chemical weapons. Dr. Welch took strong exception to your views. He was particularly upset over your assertion that the U.S. has a large stock pile of nerve gas ammunition. It is his contention that the entire U.S. supply of nerve agents would not last longer than one and a half days in a war time situation. He appears to be using this argument in his discussions in Europe. I would be interested in your views.

The only comment I would have on your interview, relates to your assertion that "military commanders don't like poison gas weapons". I observed the 1980 REFORGER exercises in Germany in which one side was allowed to use chemicals and the other was not. I must say that the military commanders on the "no-use" side were almost vehement in their desire to use chemicals themselves. Unfortunately I didn't have the opportunity to ask those who were using the weapons whether they considered them effective. I suspect that those that have them won't find them very useful whereas those who do not have them think they would be a great asset.

When are you coming out here again?

Sincerely,

  
L. Craig Johnstone

1 Encl:  
Article