

UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY  
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1970

OFFICE OF  
THE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: U.S. Policy on Toxins

After considering the report submitted to you under NSSM 85, I recommend Option III--renouncing the use of toxins regardless of their method of production and confining our toxin program to research and development for defensive purposes only and to protect against technological surprise.

This recommendation is based on my conclusion that the case for developing a retaliatory capability with toxins (in addition to current and planned lethal chemical agents) is not persuasive, while the domestic and international political costs involved are incommensurately high. Specifically, preserving the option to do so would seriously undermine the favorable impact, and even the credibility, of your November 25 announcements; increase the difficulty of winning international support for the UK Draft Convention; and create serious difficulties in connection with our ratification of the Geneva Protocol. Moreover, there is some risk that such an indication of U.S. interest in the military utility of toxins would stimulate further interest in them by other countries.

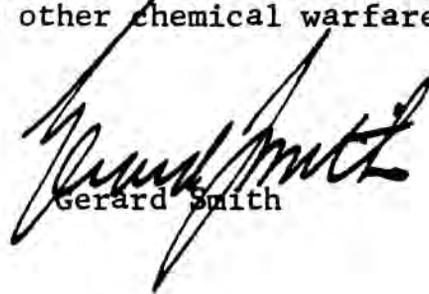
I do not believe that renunciation of the use of synthesized toxins would affect our ability to insist on treating biological methods of warfare separately

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GROUP 3. Downgraded  
at 12 year intervals;  
not automatically  
declassified.

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from chemical warfare in arms control negotiations. Nor do I think it would impair our ability to insist on such verification requirements as we may deem necessary for an agreement relating to other chemical warfare agents.



Gerard Smith

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