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DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO Department of State  
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REPORT  
TO THE  
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

US POLICY ON TOXINS

21 January 1970  
(Revised 30 January 1970)

Submitted by the  
Interdepartmental Political-Military Group  
in response to NSSM 85

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

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PART II: POLICY ISSUE AND PROGRAM OPTIONS

There is one basic issue:

Should the U.S. maintain an option to develop capabilities to retaliate with toxins against chemical or biological attack?

(Implicit in this issue is an understanding that defensive research and development programs will be authorized whether the option to develop capabilities in toxins is retained or not. Defensive research and development programs are implied in the first two options and, as noted, constitute the third option. In general, an offensive research and development program differs from a defensive research program in that the former includes R&D on weapons-delivery systems and large-scale production techniques and the latter does not.)

Since toxins may be produced either by biological processes or eventually by chemical synthesis, there are three program options.

- OPTION I: Reserve the Option to Develop, Stockpile and Use in Retaliation Toxins Produced by Either Biological Processes or Chemical Synthesis. (Implicit in the acceptance of this option is an offensive, as well as defensive, research and development program for toxins produced by either method and for related delivery systems/weapons.)
- OPTION II: Renounce the Option to Develop, Stockpile and Use in Retaliation Toxins Which are Produced by Biological Processes. Reserve the Option to Develop, Stockpile and Use in Retaliation Only Those Toxins Produced by Chemical Synthesis. (Implicit in the acceptance of this option are: (1) a defensive research and

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development program only for biologically-produced toxins; and (2) offensive, as well as defensive, research and development programs for the development of chemically-synthesized toxins are related delivery systems/weapons.)

OPTION III: Renounce the Use, and Hence the Development and the Stockpiling, of Weapons Systems Using Toxins Produced Either by Chemical Synthesis or Biological Processes. (Implicit in the acceptance of this option are only defensive research and development programs for all toxins with the purposes of assuring adequate defensive measures and of protecting against technological surprise.)