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By 88 NARA Date 5-1-01

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

5 January 1970

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INFORMATION

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MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Michael A. Guhin

THRU: Robert M. Behr

SUBJECT: Dr. DuBridge's Comments re Reactions to the President's
Chemical Warfare and Biological Research Announcement

Dr. DuBridge's memorandum to you (Tab A), on December 22, suggests two or three steps to be considered in light of reactions to the President's chemical warfare and biological research policy. The main points are:

1. Both domestic and international reactions have been generally very favorable. But at least two steps may be considered to consolidate the gains thus far (a) because the announcement touched off another round of sharp criticism of our use of tear gas and herbicides in Vietnam, and (b) because it is important to preserve international credence that the policy on biological agents will indeed be implemented.
2. To demonstrate that the U.S. attitude is not one of complete intransigency on tear gas and herbicides, it may be advisable to consider maintaining some flexibility in the U.S. position on these agents (a) by an announced willingness to enter into specific discussion concerning their status under the Geneva Protocol or control of their use through some international agreement after termination of the hostilities in Vietnam, or (b) by indications that tear gas and herbicides policy would be reviewed at the end of hostilities in Vietnam.
3. To preserve international credence regarding U.S. biological policy, and perhaps to establish a desirable precedent for verification, it would seem advisable to give the event of the destruction of existing stocks some public visibility by inviting selected Congressmen and representatives of the UN and World Health Organization to witness the process.
4. Lastly, he understands and agrees with the policy that toxins are to be considered chemical agents in spite of their biological origin.

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- 2 -

This leaves open the option to retain any toxins on their own merit. On the other hand, should there be a decision to eliminate some, or all, toxins from our stockpiles, this should be advanced as a further initiative towards peace.

Comment: (1) As you know, NSSM 85 on toxins is already underway. (2) We agree with the suggested manner of preserving international credence regarding our policy on biological agents. However, this matter will have to await the Secretary of Defense's recommendations as requested in NSDM 35. (3) We are presently working on a draft NSSM on U.S. policy on tear gas and herbicides which, if accepted, will mean that the matter is under review. (4) It may be possible to combine some or all of these matters in a statement properly timed with regard to the Senate's consideration of the Geneva Protocol.

FYI: On January 13 and 14, the President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC) will be considering, along with related subjects, the matters of (1) levels of biological research activity, (2) biological facilities, and (3) toxins.

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