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Authority EO 12958By 88 NARA Date 5-1-01~~SECRET~~THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

9 DEC 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of State

✓Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Director, Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: Chemical Warfare and Biological Research -- Terminology

I notice that current documents of various U.S. Government Agencies continue to refer to CBW, i.e., chemical and biological warfare. Such terminology, I believe, is seriously misleading and should be stricken from our lexicon.

The misleading aspects inherent in the term, CBW, are twofold:

- The first reason is that the term does not describe even remotely the United States program in the chemical or the biological areas. Our programs are best described as chemical warfare and biological research. The programs are so widely different in terms of (a) the strategic concept, (b) the deterrent value, (c) the tactical aspects of retaliation, and (d) the potential positive humanitarian dividends that they should be referred to separately. We do have a retaliatory chemical warfare capability, which we hope will have a deterrent capability on prospective users of chemical agents. We do not have a biological warfare capability, nor do we plan to have one. We will maintain, for defensive purposes, a biological research program.
- The second reason for reacting against the CBW terminology is that it connotes a generic interrelationship between the chemical and biological fields when, in fact, no such relationship exists. History has shown the possibility of chemical warfare. It is possible, furthermore, to conceive of biological warfare -- though, again, the United States does not have the capability and proposes now to produce no capability to wage biological warfare. It is virtually impossible, however, to conceive of the circumstances in which chemical warfare and biological warfare, in a simultaneous or joint way, would be planned for and implemented.

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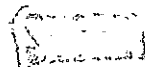
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While terminology may seem to be a minor point in some cases, this is one instance in which precise terminology is important. I would hope that in referring to the United States program the term chemical warfare and biological research would be used. I would also hope that in referring to other nations' programs, or to the general field of activity, chemical warfare and biological activities of whatever nature would be differentiated and treated separately. To do otherwise will continue to confuse the American public, our allies, our potential adversaries, and even those in our own government responsible for defense programs.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "J. S. [unclear]", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.A faint, rectangular stamp or mark, possibly a date or reference code, located at the bottom center of the page.