

# U.S. Slow to Dismantle Its Germ-Warfare Arsenal

ROBERT W. SMITH  
 WASHINGTON, Nov. 10 (AP)—A year ago, President Nixon said that the United States was renouncing germ warfare. Despite the President's proclamation and the publicity that accompanied the United States' decision, biological research, as was appropriated last year, is being carried out at research facilities at Fort Detrick.

The Government has done away with not only the biological research facilities at Fort Detrick, but also the biological research facilities at the University of Michigan.

In addition, the State Department is expected to announce that it will not ratify the Geneva Convention on Biological Weapons.

Despite the fact that the United States is a party to the Geneva Convention, the State Department has not yet announced whether it will ratify it.

In any case, they committed doubts that it will manage to clear all the executive branch's witnesses this year, it may not even start the hearings on the protocol until January.

**Marginal Area of Policy**  
 Advocates of ratification argue that while germ warfare is a marginal area in terms of national policy, the issue provides an index to the seriousness of the Administration's intentions. Last Nov. 25 the President

announced that the United States would not use any biological weapons. He also pledged that research on biological agents would be only defensive in nature.

While specific information on biological agents is secret, Government officials to Fine Blum, head of the division of biological research, were produced and 270 pounds of virus, which is not from the air, when the virus is kept under refrigeration.

While it is suspected that the Government's policy is to destroy biological weapons, it is also suspected that the Government is conducting research on biological weapons.

Some of the agents are stockpiled at Fort Detrick. These agents produce typhus, Q fever, and anthrax.

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probably spend almost the same amount on germ warfare in this fiscal year as it spent in the last. Congress appropriated \$21.9 million when it authorized \$21.1 million for this fiscal year.

What the army has done is shift almost all the funds it used to spend to buy germ agents into "defensive equipment," which a Pentagon spokesman said included warning devices, protective equipment and clothing and anti-gas masks.

The figure for "biological research"—which used to embrace offensive and defensive research but is now supposed to be limited to defensive research—has not dropped. It remains at \$7.6 million.

The President's decision gave the Office of the Surgeon General in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare the go-ahead on the army's plans to destroy the stockpiles. While the Office of the Surgeon General is to make a specimen for the Army's research, the Army is to make a specimen for the State Department's research.

Government discussions of a method of convincingly destroying the stockpiles of germs have included the suggestion of having outside observers as witnesses.

This is sensitive however, since the Army is reportedly determined to have no outside witnesses to the destruction of the poison bullets and darts since it is apparently unwilling to have anyone know they existed.

The bullets and darts reportedly contain botulinum, a toxin that produces a swift and fatal disease of the nervous system. Knowledgeable sources indicate that the weapons could serve only one purpose: assassination. To kill an enemy leader, it would be necessary to do no more than nick him.