

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

ROBERT M. SMITH
 WASHINGTON, Nov. 9 (AP)—The White House today said that the United States was renouncing germ warfare, despite the President's proclamation and the public statements that accompanied the United States' withdrawal from the Biological Weapons Convention last year.

It has not, however, announced that it has ordered the destruction of its biological weapons stockpiles, or that it has ordered the closure of its biological weapons research facilities at Fort Detrick, Md.

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announced that the United States would not use any biological weapons, and that it had ordered the destruction of its biological weapons stockpiles, and that it had ordered the closure of its biological weapons research facilities at Fort Detrick, Md.

While specific information on biological agents is secret, Government officials to Fine Blum announced the existence of biological agents where biological agents were produced and stored, and that the agents were produced and stored in the form of spores, toxins and other products of biological agents.

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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-gases.

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 to begin the process of destroying the stockpiles. While the Office of the Surgeon General is in charge of the process, the Army is in charge of the destruction of the stockpiles.

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.

Leakage Is Suspected

The Government's order to destroy biological weapons has been suspected of leaking to the press. A spokesman for the White House said that the order was not intended to be a public statement, but that it had been reported in the press.

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