

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Chemical Weapons on Okinawa

At the direction of the President, the Department of Defense announced on 22 July 1969 that preparations were being made to remove lethal chemical agents stored on Okinawa. No action has yet been taken to implement the President's directive, and I am seriously concerned that continued delay could have an adverse effect on both U.S. - Japanese relations and the credibility of the Department of Defense. I have therefore requested my staff to review the various alternatives for removing the weapons now on Okinawa and to provide, on an expeditious basis, an analysis of the military, technical, and political implications of each.

To facilitate this review, the following information is requested by 15 September 1969:

1. Circumstances pertaining to the decision in 1961 to deploy chemical weapons in WESTPAC, to include:
  - a. nature of threat deployment was designed to counter;
  - b. rationale for requirements level established;
  - c. extent to which decision was coordinated within the Defense Department and with other Executive agencies.
2. Circumstances pertaining to deployment authorizations in 1963 and subsequently, to include, for each deployment, the information requested under paragraph one above.
3. Any changes in the situation that may have occurred since 1965 (the time of the last deployment) which may reduce the continued need for forward deployment of chemical weapons in WESTPAC.

Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
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Sec Def Cont Nr. X-  
DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR  
INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY  
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4. Analysis of the options available for either relocation or disposal of the chemical agents now stored on Okinawa, to include:

- a. consideration of all feasible relocation sites in the Pacific;
- b. return of weapons to Hawaii or CONUS;
- c. detoxification of agents in Okinawa itself or elsewhere in the Pacific;

The pros and cons of each option considered above should take cognizance of such factors as:

- a. the time and cost involved;
- b. risk involved in terminating the forward deployment of chemical agents in WESTPAC;
- c. public sensitivity in the United States and elsewhere to the presence or proximity of chemical agents;
- d. probable adverse impact on impending negotiations with the Micronesians regarding the future political status of the TTPI which would occur if chemical agents were redeployed to Guam.

*David Parked*

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