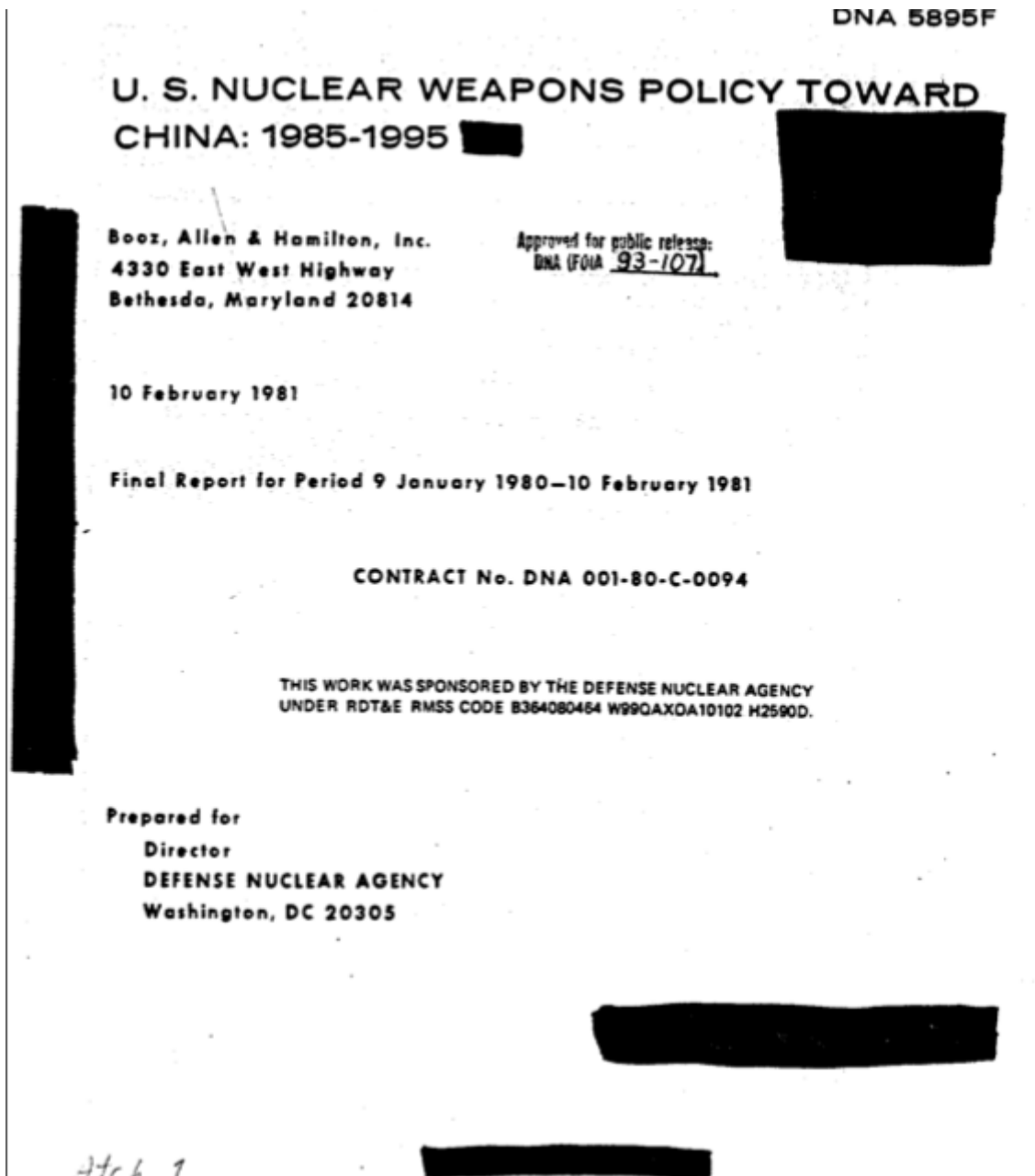


US Nuclear Weapons Policy Towards China: 1985-1995



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The Chinese government saw the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968 as an unequal treaty in which the great powers were trying to prevent other countries from building a nuclear arsenal while protecting their own existing supplies. In the late 1970s the U.S. began experiencing a shift in its nuclear policy from mutually assured destruction to an emphasis on counterforce options as seen in the Schlesinger Doctrine. Although U.S.-Sino relations had improved, China's growing commitment to the development of nuclear weapons and its influence over other potential nuclear nations increased the need for the U.S. to closely examine its nuclear policy towards China.

This 1981 report examines the need to assess the role of China in the international arena with regards to the country's growing nuclear weapons capabilities. Focusing on the issues of targeting while incorporating lesser issues of weapons acquisition and modernization of programs, the report explores the bilateral relationship between China and the U.S. in regards to nuclear weapons policy.

"Current trends suggest a degree of stability in U.S.-Sino relations unprecedented in the post-1949 period. However, power alignments can change in international politics and one cannot ignore the possibility of China becoming once again antagonistic toward the United States. China's continuing commitment to the development of nuclear weapons makes it even more necessary for the United States to consider the prospects for nuclear weapons." [page 4]

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