

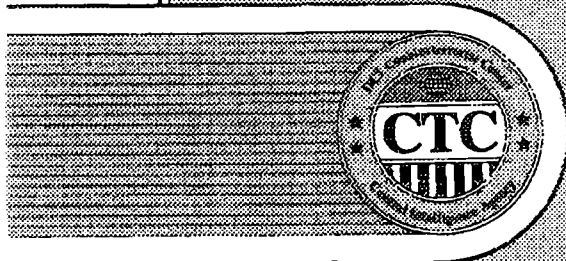
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CIADI TR 95-008



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Director of Central Intelligence



Terrorism Review



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August 1995

Counterterrorist Center



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Terrorism Review

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Page

Perspective

The Tokyo Gas Attack: Will It Be Emulated?

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The poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March was the first large-scale terrorist use of chemical weapons against a vulnerable urban target.

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Articles

[Large Redacted Area]

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Perspective

The Tokyo Gas Attack: Will It Be Emulated?

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The poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March was the first large-scale terrorist use of chemical weapons against a vulnerable urban target. Aum Shinrikyo had access to resources that are not available to most terrorist groups. Even so, Aum Shinrikyo

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failed to disperse the sarin properly, making the attack considerably less lethal than it could have been.

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[Redacted] Aum Shinrikyo was in many ways well positioned to carry out a large-scale gas attack:

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- With reported assets of about one billion dollars, the group spent millions of dollars and several years to develop its nerve gas program.

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- Aum Shinrikyo's registration as a religious cult protected it from obtrusive police scrutiny of its facilities, because the Japanese are highly sensitive to any harassment of religious groups.

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Even with the resources available to Aum Shinrikyo, the number of people killed—12—in the Tokyo attack was far lower than the death tolls from some conventional terrorist bombings.

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Given the costs involved

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in a complicated effort such as Aum's use of sarin, we expect that a well-heeled, state-sponsored group would have the best chance to produce nerve gas and mount an attack with it. Other groups with fewer resources that may want to try a similar attack would probably quickly find themselves wanting for technical assistance, and might turn to a less sophisticated option.

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