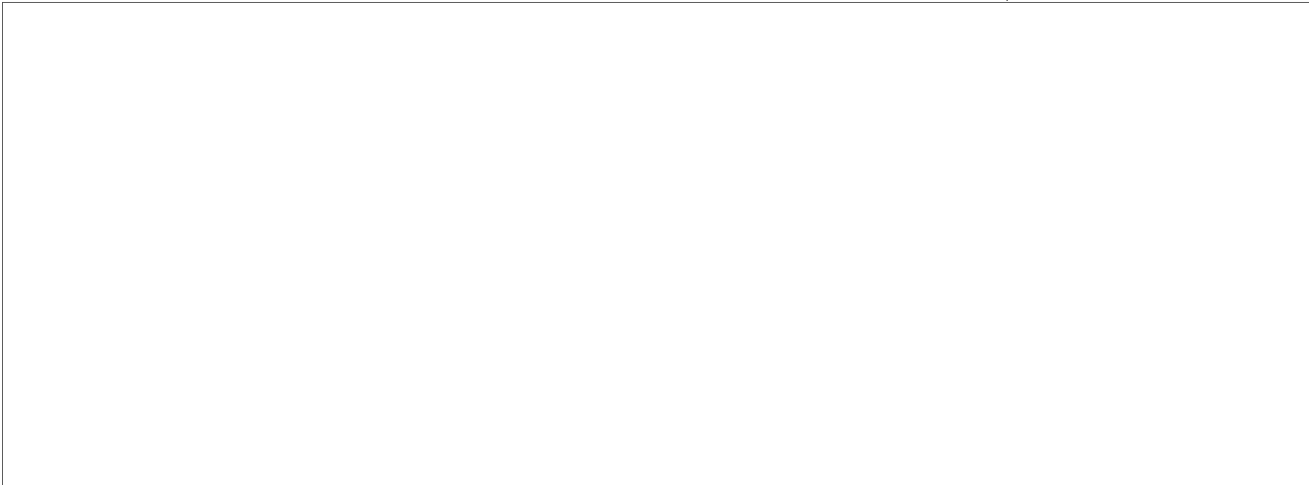


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REPORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~/WNINTEL--NOFORN

COUNTRY LAOS/USSR/VIETNAM

SUBJECT COMMENTS OF HMONG REFUGEES ON LPDR-INITIATED POISONOUS GAS
ATTACKS IN THE PHOU BIA AREA, LPDR [redacted]

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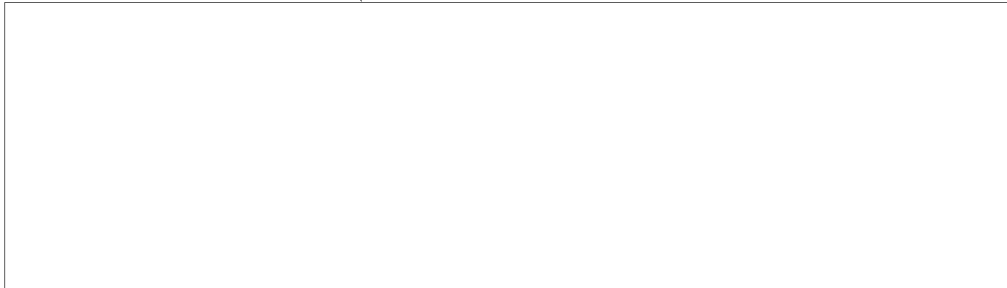
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SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO SEVERAL EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS BY HMONG REFUGEES FROM THE PHOU BIA AREA OF NORTHERN LPDR, POISONOUS GASES USED IN THE SUPPRESSION OF RESISTANCE ACTIVITIES BEGAN IN 1977 AND STOPPED AROUND LATE 1978 WHEN RESISTANCE FORCES BEGAN DISPERSING INTO SMALLER GROUPS. THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF GASES USED - ONE OF BLUE COLOR AND THE OTHER RED. THE CHEMICAL WARFARE (CW) AGENTS WERE CONTAINED IN ROCKETS FIRED FROM LIGHT OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT AND DETONATED EITHER BY TIME DELAY OR IMPACT. ONE REFUGEE WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN ONE DUD ROCKET SAID THAT MARKINGS ON THE WEAPON INDICATED IT WAS OF U.S. MANUFACTURE BUT HAD BEEN MODIFIED WITH A SOVIET NOSE CONE WHICH WAS BELIEVED TO CONTAIN THE CW AGENT. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO STATEMENTS OF A NUMBER OF HMONG REFUGEES FROM THE PHOU BIA AREA (UF0698), LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (LPDR), IN LATE OCTOBER 1979, CHEMICAL WARFARE (CW) AGENTS USED IN THE PHOU BIA, PHOU KONG KHAO (TG1313), AND PHOU YOEI (SF9398) AREAS HAD BEEN LAUNCHED FROM "L-19" AIRCRAFT FLOWN FROM VANG VIANG (TF3294), VIENTIANE (TE4388), AND PAKSANE (UF5934). THE CW AGENTS WERE CONTAINED IN ROCKETS FIRED INTO A TARGET AREA AND DETONATED IN THE AIR OR ON IMPACT. THE POISONOUS GAS WAS DESCRIBED AS SOMETIMES A "BLUE COLOR" AND OTHER TIMES A "RED." [REDACTED] IN FEBRUARY 1978 PERSONS EXPOSED TO THE RED COLORED GAS IN THE PHU BIA AREA DIED IN ABOUT 12 HOURS FOLLOWING EXPOSURE TO THE CW AGENT.

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2. ANOTHER REFUGEE [REDACTED] SAID HE KNEW OF 22 HMONG IN THE PHU BIA AREA WHO HAD DIED OF EXPOSURE TO THE CW AGENT UP TO FOUR MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF INITIAL CONTAMINATION IN FEBRUARY 1978. [REDACTED] BELIEVED THE PURPOSE OF USING THE CW AGENT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO ELIMINATE AS MUCH OF THE HMONG RESISTANCE IN THE HILLY TERRAIN AS POSSIBLE BEFORE COMMITTING LPDR GOVERNMENT TROOPS TO CONVENTIONAL SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THE LAST CW ATTACK IN THE PHOU BIA AREA WAS CONDUCTED IN MID-FEBRUARY 1978. THEREAFTER, LPDR TROOPS CEASED ITS USE IN THIS AREA BECAUSE HMONG FORCES HAD SPLIT AND DISPERSED INTO SMALLER GUERRILLA UNITS. [REDACTED] SAID THAT AS OF 20 OCTOBER 1979 WHEN HE LEFT THE PHOU BIA AREA HE ESTIMATED THERE WERE ONLY 1,500 HMONG INHABITANTS LIVING THERE, A SIGNIFICANT DECREASE FROM WHAT HE ESTIMATED TO HAVE BEEN A HMONG POPULATION OF 8,000 IN 1975.

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3. [REDACTED] ANOTHER REFUGEE, SAID THAT ON 16 APRIL 1977 [REDACTED] NEAR PHOU SANG, ABOUT 30 KILOMETERS WEST OF PHOU BIA, HE DISCOVERED AN UNEXPLODED ROCKET WHICH HE BELIEVED WAS THE SAME KIND USED IN THE GAS ATTACKS AGAINST THE RESISTANCE. [REDACTED] SAID THE ROCKET, AN APPARENT DUD, WAS FOUND IN TWO PIECES AND MEASURED OVERALL APPROXIMATELY 120 CENTIMETERS (CMS) LONG, A DIAMETER OF ABOUT 12.5 CMS, AND WEIGHED AN ESTIMATED THREE KILOGRAMS. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] SAID THE ROCKET HAD SEVERAL MARKINGS AND APPEARED COLOR-CODED. A DIAGRAM MADE BY THE RESISTANCE SHOWED THE

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TIP OF THE MISSILE TO MEASURE ABOUT 10 CMS LONG TO BE MADE OF LEAD OR STEEL AND TO BE THE COLOR OF ALUMINUM. THE NEXT PART BELOW THE TIP MEASURED ABOUT 30-32 CMS AND WAS ALSO THE COLOR OF ALUMINUM BUT IN ADDITION HAD RED STRIPES SPACED AROUND ITS BODY. [REDACTED] SAID THERE WERE THREE LINES OF WRITING WHICH HE BELIEVED TO BE "RUSSIAN," BUT WHICH COULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] SAID THE DETERMINATION OF THE LANGUAGE WAS MADE BY [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

OPINION THAT THE ROCKET CANISTER WAS OF U.S. MANUFACTURE BUT HAD BEEN MODIFIED BY THE SOVIETS IN THE UPPER STAGE TO CONTAIN

POISONOUS GAS. [REDACTED]

4. COMMENTING FURTHER ON THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ROCKET, [REDACTED] SAID THE NEXT SECTION BELOW THE RED STRIPED PORTION WAS ABOUT 20 CMS LONG AND COLORED GREEN, FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER SECTION COLORED RED, AND A FINAL PORTION THAT WAS NONDESCRIPT. THE FOLLOWING MARKINGS WERE NOTED: IN THE GREEN AREA AND IN BLOCK LETTERS WERE THE WORDS "TORQUE HEAD TO 55 PLUS 10 PLUS ZERO FT LBS;" IN THE RED AREA AND ALSO IN BLOCK LETTERS WERE THE WORDS "2 75 ROCKET MOTOR MK 40 MOD 3, BVO RD OWG NO 9220803, MCA-6-101 (FOLLOWED BY WHAT MAY BE A STAR SYMBOL), PK43 MOD 1 LOT NO BAJ7601, FSN1340-935-6021-J106, USE ONLY BETWEEN 65 (DEGREES) F AND 150;" AND FINALLY, AT THE END OF THE ROCKET AND JUST BEFORE THE PROPELLER FINS WERE THE WORDS "LOT ALC 1-52-370." [REDACTED] COMMENT: IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE MAY BE SOME SLIGHT VARIATIONS IN THE FOREGOING WHEN COMPARED WITH MANU-

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FACTURER' SPECIFICATION. THIS IS DUE TO AN UNCLEAR SKETCH AND THE FACT NOT ALL OF THE LETTERS COULD BE REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS PRINTED.)

5. [] SAID HE HAD WITNESSED THE DEATHS OF SIX OF HIS FAMILY, INCLUDING HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, WHO WERE CONTAMINATED WITH POISONOUS GAS IN JANUARY 1977. HE SAID THE SIX HAD BEEN WORKING IN A RICE FIELD IN THE TAM LO AREA WHEN AN L-19 AIRCRAFT APPEARED OVERHEAD AND FIRED A ROCKET WHICH EXPLODED IN A RED TOXIC GAS. INITIALLY, HIS FAMILY COMPLAINED OF BLURRED VISION, HEADACHE, NAUSEA AND VOMITING, INFLAMED EYES WHICH WATERED, DIZZINESS, AND AN OVERALL FEELING OF WEAKNESS. PHA SAID THAT HIS FATHER DIED ABOUT 12 HOURS AFTER EXPOSURE. HIS MOTHER, WHO ALSO EXPERIENCED ACUTE DIARRHEA, DIED WITHIN 16 HOURS THE REMAINDER OF HIS FAMILY ALL PERISHED THE FOLLOWING NIGHT AFTER THE GAS ATTACK. [] SAID THAT OTHER HMONG PEOPLE EXPOSED TO THE POISONOUS GASES LINGERED ON FOR UP TO THREE AND FOUR MONTHS. IN THESE CASES, THE INITIAL SYMPTOMS WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF HIS FAMILY WHO DIED WITHIN A DAY OR TWO, BUT ALSO INCLUDED SEVERE DIARRHEA, DIZZINESS, AND A FEELING OF THIRSTINESS. THE MORE LIQUIDS THE PERSON DRANK, THE MORE URINE WAS PASSED UNTIL EVENTUALLY THEY DIED OF DEHYDRATION. OTHER SYMPTOMS INCLUDED THE CORNEA OF THE EYE TURNING A MILKY COLOR RESULTING IN BLINDNESS, A LOSS OF APPETITE, WEAKNESS, AND MALNUTRITION.

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6. ANOTHER HMONG REFUGEE, []

[] PROVIDED

THE FOLLOWING RECORD OF CW ATTACKS FROM AUGUST 1977 TO 10 NOVEMBER 1978:

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A. ON 1 AUGUST 1977, AN L-19 AIRCRAFT USED CW AGENTS ON THE PHOU HE AREA (TF9377), LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 20 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF PHOU BIA, RESULTING IN 81 DEATHS AND 165 CONTAMINATED. [] COMMENT: CONTAMINATED REFERS TO PERSONS EXPOSED TO GAS WHO PROBABLY DIED AT A LATER DATE.)

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B. FROM 10 FEBRUARY TO 29 MARCH 1978, CW AGENTS WERE USED IN THE AREAS OF THA VIENG (UF2797), XIENG KHONG (UG1804), NAM FENG (UF1389), AND MUANG AO (UF0781) RESULTING IN AN ESTIMATED 100 PEOPLE KILLED AND OVER 100 OTHERS CONTAMINATED.

C. FROM 29 MARCH TO 5 APRIL 1978, CW AGENTS WERE AGAIN USED IN THE MUANG AO AREA WITH AN ESTIMATED 200 KILLED AND ANOTHER 100 CONTAMINATED.

D. ON 28 APRIL 1978, CW AGENTS WERE USED ON BAN TAM SAE (UF1895), BAN PHA TAM KHUM (UG1102), AND BAN SALA UG1502) WITH THE RESULT 39 KILLED AND 54 CONTAMINATED.

E. ON 7 JUNE 1978, AT 1000 HOURS, AN L-19 AIRCRAFT FIRED CW AGENTS INTO THE HMONG RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS AT TAM KHAI (TF9696) RESULTING IN 13 DEATHS AND EIGHT CONTAMINATIONS.

F. FROM 21 JUNE TO 7 JULY 1978, CW AGENTS WERE USED IN THE PHOU LAN AREA (UG2215) IN THE FOOTHILLS OF PHOU BIA RESULTING IN 76 PERSONS KILLED AND 41 CONTAMINATED. DURING THIS SAME PERIOD, 730 HMONG WERE KILLED AND 254 OTHERS WOUNDED DURING COMBINED LAO PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (LPLA) AND PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM (PAVN) MILITARY OPERATIONS USING CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY. [] COMMENT:

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[] FROM 20-29 SEPTEMBER 1978, THE TAM KHAI

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COMMAND HEADQUARTERS IN THE PHOU BIA AREA, WHICH HAD ONCE ACCOMMODATED APPROXIMATELY 60,000 PEOPLE, WAS CAPTURED BY LPLA AND PAVN FORCES. IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT 30 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED, 10 PERCENT WOUNDED, 30 PERCENT HAD ESCAPED (FLED TO THAILAND), AND THE OTHER 30 PERCENT WERE SCATTERED AND LIVING IN THE JUNGLE.)

G. ON 10 NOVEMBER 1978, THE TAM KHAI HEADQUARTERS WAS AGAIN ATTACKED WITH CW AGENTS CAUSING SEVEN DEATHS AND 24 OTHERS CONTAMINATED.

7. [REDACTED]

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8. [REDACTED]

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REPORT CLASS S E C R E T/WARNING NOTICE--INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED/NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS.

[REDACTED] ALL PORTIONS CARRY CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROLS OF OVERALL DOCUMENT

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