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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

ACIS 28/81

29 April 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Interdepartmental Working Group on CBW Arms Control
SUBJECT: Intelligence Community's Input on CW Use for Study on
CBW Arms Control [redacted]

(b)(3)

Attached is an annex on CW use in Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan prepared in response to such a request at the 21 April BWC Arms Control Working Group meeting. [redacted]

(b)(3)

[redacted]

(b)(3)

Chief,
Arms Control Intelligence Staff

Attachment:
As Stated

This memorandum may be downgraded to
CONFIDENTIAL when removed from attachment [redacted]

(b)(3)

[redacted]

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Annex

LAOS

The Vietnamese (PAVN) and the Laotian People's Liberation Army (LPLA) almost certainly have used lethal chemical agents against the dissident Hmong tribesman over a period of almost five years. [redacted] (b)(1)

[redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)

[redacted] describe repeated chemical at- (b)(1)
tacks on Hmong combatants and the civilian population with rockets, bom (b)(3)
sprays, and artillery. [redacted]

[redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)

Eyewitness accounts of symptomatic effects generally agree with those reported by a US army investigative team of medical experts, who concluded that at least three different chemical agents were used. The described effects indicate that, in some cases, two or more agents probably were used in the same attack. [redacted] (b)(3)

The range of clinical manifestations from the chemical agents, as reported by the US Army investigative team, included:

-- Immediate onset of headache, dizziness, tearing, blurred vision, chest tightness, difficult breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle weakness, and convulsions followed by death in minutes to hours--suggesting a nerve agent. [redacted] (b)(3)

-- In some instances, victims suffered almost immediate onset of severe bleeding from nose and eyes, vomiting of blood, bloody diarrhea, and rapid death--indicating a highly toxic unidentified chemical or mixture of chemicals. [redacted] (b)(3)

-- Immediate irritation and tearing of the eyes, tightness of chest, difficulty in breathing, and skin irritations--suggesting a riot control agent, such as CS. Similar effects may be exhibited by persons dosed with other riot control agents, toxic smokes and below lethal levels of nerve agent. [redacted] (b)(3)

The use of nerve agent or another highly lethal but unidentified chemical indicates Soviet involvement in the Loatian CW operations. The Soviets are believed to have supplied filled chemical munitions and possibly bulk agents; neither Laos, or Vietnam is believed to have the capability to produce nerve agents or chemical munitions on the scale necessary to conduct even limited chemical warfare. [redacted]

(b)(3)

[redacted]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

KAMPUCHEA

The military forces of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) almost certainly are using non-lethal screening smokes, riot-control agents, and possibly incapacitating chemicals against the guerrilla forces of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) and the non-Communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front, especially along the Thai-Kampuchea border. [redacted]

(b)(3)

Some riot-control agents, along with dissemination equipment and munitions, possibly have been supplied by the Soviets or come from captured US supplies. Any incapacitants would have been supplied by a third party, probably the Soviets. [redacted]

(b)(3)

The Vietnamese are capable of engaging in offensive, lethal, chemical operations with aid and supplies from the Soviets, such as evidently has occurred in Laos. Although the [redacted] on numerous occasions that the Vietnamese are using lethal chemicals, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether in fact the Vietnamese-PRK forces have used lethal chemicals. [redacted]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(3)

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(b)(3)

Afghanistan

Chemical weapons evidently have been used against Afghan insurgent strongholds and civilian populations both during the fall of 1979 and after the Soviet invasion in December 1979.

[redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)
[redacted] (b)(3)

The Soviets recently have admitted that their security forces have used riot control chemicals in Afghanistan. Even preceding this admission, we were certain that the Soviets had employed irritant agents of various kinds. Incapacitating agents, i.e. chemicals which cause behavioral changes or unconsciousness, also probably have been used. Lethal chemicals, such as nerve agents, may have been used by the Soviets [redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)

Eyewitness accounts of chemical assaults attributed a wide range of colors--from colorless vapor to yellow, blue green, and black--to the chemical clouds. Accounts of symptomatic effects also suggest a wide range of clinical manifestations which indicate that three or more chemical agents or combinations of agents may have been used. There is no obvious correlation between chemical cloud color and symptomatic effects. [redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)

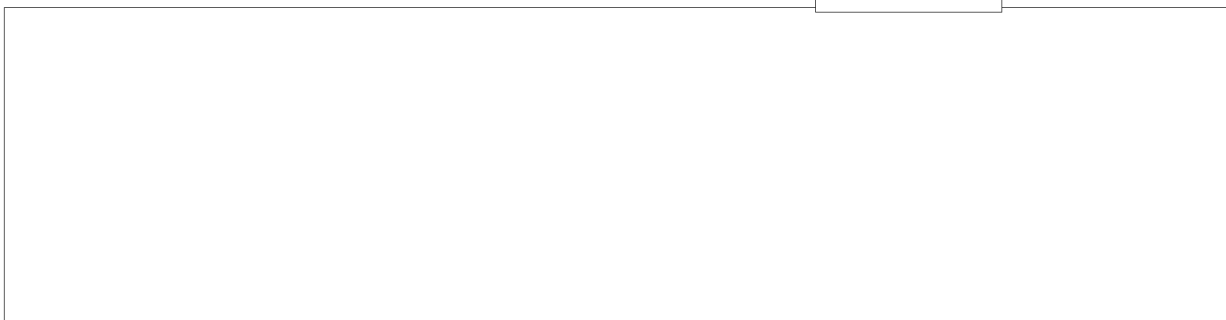
Certain clinical manifestations have been repeatedly described [redacted] (b)(1)
[redacted] (b)(3)

The lack of expert interviewing or on the scene analysis probably has resulted in less clarity in the definition of clinical manifestations. Even so, some frequently reported symptoms appear to fit those that would be produced by certain classes of active chemicals: [redacted] (b)(3)

-- Immediate tearing and burning sensation of the eyes, tightness of chest, difficulty in breathing and skin irritation. The symptoms are indicative of riot control chemicals such as CS. Similar effects may be shown by persons dosed with toxic smoke and below-lethal levels of nerve agent. [redacted] (b)(3)

-- The above symptoms accompanied by severe itching and inflammation of the skin, pain, small blisters and small pustules which lasted for days to weeks and eventually scabbed over. While these effects may on rare occasions be produced by the riot control agent CS, they are most likely associated with a chemical such as phosgene oxime or other blistering agents which can cause death. [redacted] (b)(3)

- Watery eyes and nose, respiration difficulty, dizziness, and a feeling of weakness followed by unconsciousness for three to four hours. Very few deaths were associated with these symptoms. The agent apparently is a new incapacitant, of unknown chemical composition. [redacted] (b)(3)
- Fever, depression, dizziness, and disorientation symptoms may be the result of a behavior modifying compound of unknown composition. [redacted] (b)(3)
- Headache, dizziness, tearing, blurred vision, difficult breathing, diarrhea, paralysis and convulsions followed by death. This suggests nerve agent poisoning. [redacted] (b)(3)



(b)(1)
(b)(3)