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LDX

6-8-23

MEMORANDUM FOR:

FROM:

ATTENTION:

REFERENCE:

[Redacted]

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We are in the process of a detailed review of the Soviet response to the 22 March report.

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Secretary Haig's report was taken are researching those points in the Soviet response that may need answering. A careful analysis and publication of such a response, if deemed appropriate, will take several weeks. In the interim let me summarize our initial impressions to date.

° With almost no exceptions the technical issues raised by the Soviets are so obviously specious that to respond to them would be counter productive. One approach to the more serious technical issues may be to have the "outside" scientific world do the technical reporting

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° Any response, especially one related to questions of toxicology or natural contamination issues must be carefully crafted. While I am sure evidence exists to refute the Soviet positions point-by-point, much information is still unpublished or classified. Some recent information concerning test results from [redacted] should be incorporated into any US response if that becomes necessary. We have still not obtained all of that [redacted] data, however, and we need to examine it very carefully before ascribing conclusions to work not under our control. Our preliminary reading is that it will buttress the US position most eloquently if it can be released

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° The Soviet response raised the question of linkage between the US defoliation program and Secretary Haig's report. Some of the alleged relationships are silly, such as their attempt to describe how our program with Agent Orange resulted in an ecological "epiphytotic" that resulted in the spread of FUSARIUM spores which has led to the findings of the mycotoxins. This allegation should not be dealt with by the US in any response. The claims in the paper of long term medical effects from dioxin are serious enough as to require some very careful thought prior to making any statement in rebuttal. [redacted]

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In any event, responding to these questions is not in the purview of the Intelligence Community.

We strongly recommend that no technical judgments from any Agency be released by the State Department until after the IC has had ample time to research the Soviet response more thoroughly. We would have no objection to a statement that indicated that:

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[redacted] are currently reviewing the Soviet's critiques seriously, that preliminary review indicates that the Soviets' concerns are adequately answered by the Secretary's report and new data released since its publication, that both private organizations and other countries have publicly supported the Secretary's report on the basis of their own independent investigations, that the bulk of the Soviet critique does not deal with the primary questions raised by the secretary's report...the absolute proof that people are dying from chemical attacks..., and that the US feels the report stands on its own and encourages its being read side-by-side with the Soviet response.

If you should determine that a point-by-point rebuttal of the technical [redacted] questions raised by the Soviet critique is necessary, we will support a request to participate in such an analysis. We estimate that approximately 100 man-hours of senior analytical time will be required to do an appropriately thorough job in such an endeavor, and would need a suspense of at least one week.

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