

EXERCISE

CB-0054

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EXDIS REVIEW

- Cat. A - Caption removed; transferred to O/FADRI;
- Cat. B - Transferred to O/FADRI with additional access controlled by S/S
- Cat. C - Caption and custody retained by S/S

Reviewed by: Elijah Kelly Jr.
 Date: 10/21/88 19

(F) B-6

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TOR: 091007Z FEB 79

PP RUEAIIIS
 ZNY CCCCC ZCC STATE ZZH
 TPP RUEHGV RUEHDT RUEHJES RUEHPS RUMTBK
 DE RUEHC #4063 CH00601
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 P R 090457Z FEB 79
 FM SECSTATE WASHDC
 TO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2924
 INFO RUEHDT/USMISSION USJNY NEW YORK 7062
 RUEHJES/EMBASSY VIENTIANE 9920
 RUEHPS/EMBASSY PARIS 6940
 RUMTBK/EMBASSY BANGKOK 2995
 BT
 C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 034063

ALL
b3

EXDIS

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/8/85 (LYNE, STEPHEN P.)

TAGS: SHUP, WCOL, SREF, PORG, PEPR, AL, US (ICRC)

SUBJECT: (C) ICRC INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED USE OF POISON GAS AGAINST HONG IN LAOS

REF: A. GENEVA 01516, S. UDORN 0041

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)
2. WE AGREE WITH OBSERVATION BY ICRC THAT "WEPE KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTENCE OF AN INVESTIGATING BODY MIGHT DETER THE FUTURE USE OF POISON GAS."
3. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT TO BE EFFECTIVE, ANY SUCH INVESTIGATION MUST BE CONDUCTED BY BODY, SUCH AS THE ICRC, WHOSE INTERNATIONAL POSITION WOULD ENSURE THAT ITS FINDINGS WOULD BE ACCEPTED AS IMPARTIAL AND NOT BE REJECTED OUT OF HAND BY LAO AS BIASED. THUS, WHILE US WOULD BE PREPARED

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by L. Wolcott DATE 11/17/88

- () RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
- () EXERCISE () DECLASSIFY in PART
- () DENY () Non-responsive info.

FOR EC or PA exemptions (b)(1)

- CIA (b)(3) IN authority to:
- () CLASSIFY as _____ OADR
 - () DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C, OADR

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TO ASSIST ICRC IN AN INVESTIGATION, INCLUDING SHARING INFORMATION IT HAS DEVELOPED, IT WOULD BE ESSENTIAL THAT ICRC DEVELOP ITS OWN INFORMATION/EVIDENCE. (IF ICRC RELIES SOLELY ON US INFORMATION, ITS REPORT WOULD BE TAINTED IN LAO EYES; WINT OF ICRC-US COLLUSION WOULD SET BACK ENTIRE EFFORT, LIMITING IMPACT NOT ONLY OF ICRC ACTIONS BUT ANY BILATERAL APPROACHES WE MIGHT MAKE.)

4. WE RECOGNIZE THAT ICRC ON-SITE INSPECTION OF AREA WHERE POISON GAS WAS ALLEGEDLY USED WOULD BE INFEASIBLE, AND THAT WITHOUT SUCH VISITS CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DEVELOP. (WE HAVE IN MIND UODRN'S POINT, REF B, THAT SEVERELY-AFFECTED HMONG GAS VICTIMS WOULD PROBABLY NOT SURVIVE LONG TREK FROM THEIR HOMELANDS TO THAILAND).

5. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT ICRC INVESTIGATION OF CHARGES ENTAILING PERHAPS NO MORE THAN INTERVIEWS WITH HMONG REFUGEES CLAIMING TO BE WITNESSES TO GAS ATTACKS WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE STRONG DETERRENT EFFECT ON LAO/VIETNAMESE. SUCH INTERVIEWS COULD BE CONDUCTED BY ICRC DELEGATE IN BANGKOK.

6. DRAWING ON THE ABOVE YOU SHOULD NOTE TO DEPARTMENT BELIEF THAT EXISTING INFORMATION WARRANTS INVESTIGATION AND THAT US BELIEVES THAT ICRC IS QUALIFIED AND CAPABLE TO PERFORM SUCH INVESTIGATION ON ITS OWN.
VANCE

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END OF MESSAGE

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