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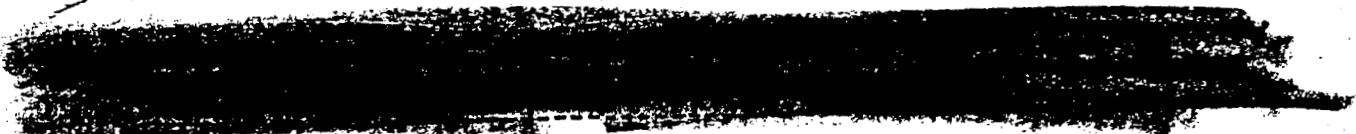
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EO 12065: GDS 3/21/86 (LEVIN, BURTON) OR-M
TAGS: SHUM, SREF, MOPS, TH, CB, VN
SUBJ: POSSIBLE USE OF CHEMICAL WARFARE IN CAMBODIA

REF: A. BANGKOK 9268, B. BANGKOK 5515, C. BANGKOK 10478,
D. STATE 30654, E. STATE 53604

1. (SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: DK SOURCES CONTINUE TO MAKE FREQUENT CLAIMS THAT VIETNAM IS PRACTICING WIDESPREAD CHEMICAL WARFARE IN CAMBODIA. SOME SECONDARY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE, INCLUDING ALLEGEDLY CONTAMINATED GARMENTS AND WATER, HAS BEEN POUCHED TO WASHINGTON FOR ANALYSIS, BUT WE DO NOT HAVE RESULTS. SEVERAL RECENT SECOND-HAND REPORTS FROM NON-DK SOURCES SUCH AS AN ICRC PHYSICIAN, ROYAL THAI ARMY INTELLIGENCE, AND EMROFF INTERVIEWS, HAVE PROVIDED ADDITIONAL INDICATIONS OF CHEMICAL USE (WHICH COULD INCLUDE PIOT CONTROL AGENTS OR DEFOLIANTS.) THERE HAVE BEEN OBSERVATIONS OF PATIENTS ON THE BORDER WITH OTHERWISE UNEXPLICABLE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS. HOWEVER, THE CASE AGAINST THE VIETNAMESE REMAINS INCONCLUSIVE FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT. END SUMMARY

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3. DK SOURCES REGULARLY REITERATE CLAIMS OF VIETNAMESE USE OF CHEMICAL WARFARE, ESPECIALLY POISON GAS AND TOXIC CHEMICALS IN CAMBODIA. MOST REPORTS ASSERT THAT POISON GAS DELIVERED VIA AERIAL SPRAYING OR 105/130MM ARTILLERY SHELLS, MOST OFTEN IN THE PAILIN AREA OF BATTAMBANG PROVINCE AND IN PURSAT PROVINCE, BUT OTHER DELIVERY METHODS AND LOCATIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN REPORTED.

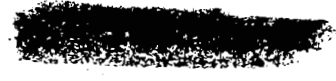
4. CITED BELOW ARE RECENT SECOND-HAND REPORTS OF ALLEGED CHEMICAL WARFARE INCIDENTS.

INCIDENT NO. 1

DATE AND LOCATION: JANUARY 30, NEAR CAMP 007, NONG SAMET (TA5330)

DESCRIPTION: PAVN ALLEGEDLY FIRED 15 MORTAR ROUNDS AGAINST KHMER SEREI. ROUNDS RELEASED GREY SMOKE ON IMPACT WHICH INCAPACITATED 30 KHMER SEREI FOR 15 MINUTES. NO DEATHS REPORTED. SYMPTOMS INCLUDED: CHILLINESS; MENTAL CONFUSION; LOSS OF SPEECH; LOSS OF SENSATION; HEAVY FLOW OF TEARS FROM EYE IRRITATION; AND VOMITING.

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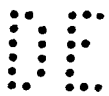


DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by Dwlook DATE 10/12/88

() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
() EXCISE () DECLASSIFY in PART
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FOI, EO or PA exemptions CIA (R)

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() CLASSIFY as _____ DATE _____
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INCIDENT NO. 7

LOCATION AND DATE: FEBRUARY 29, 15-20 KILOMETERS
SOUTHEAST OF NONG PRU

DESCRIPTION: DK SOLDIER REPORTED HE WAS IN FOREST
AT NIGHT. HE SAW, FELT, AND HEARD NOTHING, BUT
NOTICED A "STRANGE SMELL". SYMPTOMS WERE: NAUSEA;
VOMITING; PHYSICAL WEAKNESS; DIZZINESS; AND HEAD-
ACHE. HIS GARMENT HAS BEEN DOUGHED TO EDGEWOOD
ARSENAL FOR ANALYSIS. (REF C).

SOURCE: ROYAL THAI ARMY

INCIDENT NO. 8

DATE AND LOCATION: MARCH 7, HUEI SA-LAO BRIDGE IN
CAMBODIA, ABOUT 30 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF
ARANYAPRATHET.

DESCRIPTION: THAI MILITARY SOURCES REPORTED
HENG SAMRIN FORCES USING ARTILLERY FIRED GAS
ROUNDS (PROBABLY TEAR GAS) AGAINST KHMER ROUGE.

SOURCE: HONG KONG AFP MONITORED BY FBIS BANGKOK 070522.

5. COMMENT: SURVEY OF THE ABOVE-REPORTED SYMPTOMS
AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALLEGED CHEMICAL WARFARE
INCIDENTS PRODUCES CONTRADICTIONARY AND INCOMPLETE
RESULTS. IN MANY CASES, THE COMBINATION OF
SYMPTOMS DESCRIBED DOES NOT MATCH THE USUAL
SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAJOR TYPES OF
CHEMICAL WEAPONS, ACCORDING TO DOCTORS HERE.
NEVERTHELESS, IT IS POSSIBLE, IN VIEW OF THE
NUMEROUS REPORTS OF LUNG IRRITATION, THAT AT LEAST
NON-LETHAL RIOT CONTROL AGENTS SUCH AS TEAR AND
NAUSEA GASES HAVE BEEN USED. IN CAMBODIAN JUNGLE
CONDITIONS, THERE ARE POTENTIAL MILITARY ADVANTAGES
TO THE VIETNAMESE FROM USE OF CHEMICALS TO ATTACK
KHMER ENEMIES, OR DENY THEM TERRITORY, WITHOUT
SENDING VIETNAMESE TROOPS INTO DIFFICULT TERRAIN.

6. IN ANY CASE, THE EMBASSY IS NOT IN A POSITION
TO DRAW DEFINITIVE CONCLUSIONS FROM CIRCUMSTANTIAL
EVIDENCE SUCH AS REPORTED ABOVE. DK SOURCE
REPORTS MUST CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN CAUTIOUS
APPRAISALS IN LIGHT OF OBVIOUS SELF-INTERESTS.
ALL MISSION ELEMENTS ARE ALERT TO THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE ISSUE AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP
INFORMATION WHEREVER POSSIBLE. THE ICRC IS ALSO
UNDERTAKING INVESTIGATIONS, REPORTING TO GENEVA,
BUT WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON ANY RESULTS TO DATE.
ICRC HERE HAS MADE CLEAR THAT IT DOES NOT WISH
TO BECOME INVOLVED WITH THIRD COUNTRIES IN
INVESTIGATING THIS SUBJECT AND THAT IT IS
DETERMINED TO PROCEED INDEPENDENTLY.
ABRAMOWITZ

END OF MESSAGE

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