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Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION EUR-12

2267

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EA-12 DODE-00 H-01 10-35 NEA-07 NSC-01 NSAR-00
L-03 TRSE-00 PH-09 PA-02 ACDA-12 ICAE-00 SP-02
SPRS-02 /181 W

MYCOTOXINS, HAVE BEEN USED IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. WE ARE CONTINUING TO LOOK CLOSELY AT THE EXTREMELY DISTURBING AMERICAN REPORTS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE IN AFGHANISTAN. "THE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IS A FLAGRANT CONTRADICTION OF THE CIVILISED STANDARDS REFLECTED IN THE 1925 PROTOCOL. MOREOVER THE USE OF TOXINS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA WOULD REPRESENT A BREACH OF THE 1972 CONVENTION BANNING BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS."

FOOT
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P 231323Z JUN 82
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7644
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 04034

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: NATO, PARM, MOPS, UK
SUBJ: UK PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT AND PRESS GUIDANCE
ON CW USE

1. UK MISSION HAS CIRCULATED TEXT OF HMG'S REPLY TO JUNE 7 PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION BY LORD HYLTON ON CW USE, WITH PRESS GUIDANCE FOR ANSWERING FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS. PARLIAMENTARY REPLY STATES THAT HMG HAS CONCLUDED THAT "CHEMICAL WEAPONS, PROBABLY INCLUDING MYCOTOXINS, HAVE BEEN USED IN SOUTH EAST ASIA"; HMG IS "CONTINUING TO LOOK CLOSELY AT THE EXTREMELY DISTURBING AMERICAN REPORTS OF CHEMICAL WARFARE IN AFGHANISTAN." GUIDANCE FOR ANSWERING FOLLOW-ON PRESS QUESTIONS STATES, INTER ALIA, THAT:

-- "THE SOVIET UNION IS THE ONLY LIKELY SUPPLIER" OF THE CHEMICALS USED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT THE UK HAS "NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT."

-- EVIDENCE IS INSUFFICIENT TO JUDGE "EXTENT" OF CW USE IN AFGHANISTAN.

-- USE IN LAOS, CAMBODIA AND AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT BE A BREACH OF THE GENEVA PROTOCOL, SINCE THE LATTER COVERS USE ONLY BETWEEN STATES PARTIES, AND NONE OF THESE STATES HAS RATIFIED THE CONVENTION.

-- THE UK, IN ADDITION TO SUPPORTING THE UN INVESTIGATION, IS CONSIDERING WHAT OTHER MEASURES MIGHT BE TAKEN TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF CW USE WITHOUT SERIOUS RISK OF DISCOVERY.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF UK PAPER:

WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION BY LORD HYLTON, 7 JUNE 1982.

QUESTION: "TO ASK HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT WHAT EVIDENCE THEY HAVE SEEN, IF ANY, THAT POISON GAS OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS HAVE BEEN USED AGAINST GUERRILLA FORCES AND CIVILIANS IN LAOS, CAMBODIA AND AFGHANISTAN: AND WHETHER THEY WILL MAKE A STATEMENT, IF IT SEEMS THAT THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL AND THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION OF 1972 HAVE BEEN CONTRAVENED."

ANSWER: "CAREFUL AND INDEPENDENT STUDY OF INFORMATION RELEASED TO US BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS NOW LED US TO BELIEVE THAT CHEMICAL WEAPONS, PROBABLY INCLUDING

PRESS LINE:

- ON WHAT EVIDENCE HAVE YOU BASED THESE CLAIMS?
- OUR JUDGEMENTS ARE BASED PRIMARILY ON THE DETAILED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS RELEASED TO US BY THE US GOVERNMENT. IN ADDITION WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER SOME FURTHER INDEPENDENT INFORMATION IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND HAVE ALSO LOOKED CAREFULLY AT THAT PUBLISHED BY OTHER STATES.
- HAS THE UK ANY INDEPENDENT EVIDENCE?
- AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS EARLIER THIS YEAR, A SAMPLE OBTAINED BY US FROM LAOTIAN HILL TRIBESMEN IS PRESENTLY BEING ANALYSED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UK GOVERNMENT CHEMICAL DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENT AT PORTON DOWN. SOME LENGTHY AND COMPLICATED TESTS ARE INVOLVED AND RESULTS ARE STILL AWAITED.
- WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE RESULTS?
- WE HAVE ALREADY MADE CLEAR THAT WE INTEND TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE UN EXPERTS GROUP ANY RESULTS WHICH WILL HELP THEM IN THEIR INVESTIGATION.

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CBAS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by RAW DATE 11/3/88

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- EXCISE DECLASSIFY in PART
- DENY Non-responsive info.

FOI, EO or PA exemptions _____
TS authority to:
 CLASSIFY as _____, OADR
 DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C. OADR

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INCURRING SERIOUS RISK OF DISCOVERY.

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SPRS-02 /101 W
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USMISSION GENEVA

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- WHAT EVIDENCE HAVE YOU OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT?
- IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THAT STATES SUCH AS LAOS AND VIETNAM COULD EFFECTIVELY WAGE CHEMICAL WARFARE WITHOUT SOME DEGREE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM MORE ADVANCED STATES. THE SOVIET UNION IS THE ONLY LIKELY SUPPLIER, BUT WE HAVE NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT.
- WHY ARE YOU LESS SURE ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS RELATING TO AFGHANISTAN?
- WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT SOME CHEMICALS HAVE BEEN USED THERE BUT AS YET WE HAVE NOT SEEN SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO JUDGE THE EXTENT OF THEIR USE. FROM THE REPORTS AVAILABLE WE BELIEVE THAT AT LEAST SOME FORM OF INCAPACITATING AGENT HAS BEEN USED.
- WHICH AGENTS DO YOU THINK HAVE BEEN USED?
- IT SEEMS QUITE PROBABLE THAT LETHAL MYCOTOXINS HAVE BEEN USED IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT US TO NAME OTHER SPECIFIC AGENTS UNTIL THEIR PRESENCE HAS BEEN PROVED BY SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS.
- DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL HAS BEEN BREACHED?
- THE UK, UNLIKE A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES INCLUDING THE US, DOES NOT CONSIDER THE PROHIBITIONS COVERED BY THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL TO FALL WITHIN CUSTOMARY INTERNATIONAL LAW. WHILE WE UTTERLY CONDEMN THE USE OF CW AGENTS AGAINST THE INHABITANTS OF ANY STATE, WE CONSIDER THAT THE GENEVA PROTOCOL COVERS USE ONLY BETWEEN STATES PARTIES. LAOS, CAMBODIA AND AFGHANISTAN HAVE NOT RATIFIED THIS CONVENTION.
- WHAT ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO STOP THE USE OF SUCH AGENTS?
- WE AND MANY OTHER STATES HAVE STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE EFFORTS OF THE UN EXPERTS GROUP TO CARRY OUT A FULL AND INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE ALLEGATIONS. WE REGRET, HOWEVER, THAT CERTAIN STATES HAVE REFUSED THEM ACCESS TO ALLEGED TARGET AREAS. SUCH ACTION CAN ONLY BUT INCREASE SUSPICION THAT SUCH AGENTS HAVE INDEED BEEN USED. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF CONSIDERING WHAT OTHER MEASURES MIGHT BE TAKEN TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THESE WEAPONS CAN BE USED IN THE FUTURE WITHOUT

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