

EXCISE

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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INFO NATO COLLECTIVE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 06873

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: NATO, PARM  
SUBJ: OCTOBER 29 BRIEFING AT NATO BY CBM TEAM

REF: STATE 294092

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY AND COMMENT: CBM BRIEFING TEAM PRESENTED TO NATO SENIOR POLITICAL COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 29 NEW AND COMPELLING EVIDENCE OF THE USE OF CBM IN AFGHANISTAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIA (SEA). BRIEFING WAS VERY WELL RECEIVED BY ALLIES AND STRUCK EXCELLENT BALANCE BETWEEN TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF EVIDENCE AND THE HUMAN COSTS OF CBM USE. IN CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS LATER IN THE DAY, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF OTHER DELEGATIONS COMMENTED THAT THE PRESENTATION AND ARGUMENTS HAD BEEN MOST PERSUASIVE.

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WE BELIEVE THAT BRIEFING TEAM'S WORK HERE MAY HELP  
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GALVANIZE SOME OF THE ALLIES WHO HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT EFFORTS AT THE UN TO KEEP THE CBW ISSUE ALIVE AND IN THE FOREFRONT OF WORLD OPINION.

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END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

3. FOLLOWING INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY ASY DANNENBRING AND U.S. REP, TEAM LEADER CROCKER BEGAN PRESENTATION. HE NOTED THAT IT MAY HAVE SEEMED TO SOME OF OUR ALLIES THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN QUIET OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS ON THE CBW ISSUE AND IT MAY HAVE BEEN MISINTERPRETED IN SOME CAPITALS THAT THE U.S. HAS LOST INTEREST IN THE ISSUE. THIS IS NOT CORRECT -- WE HAVE NOT LOST INTEREST AT ALL. WE HAVE BEEN GATHERING EVIDENCE AND WE WILL SOON ISSUE A STRONG STATEMENT.

4. CROCKER CONTINUED THAT DESPITE ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS AND NUMEROUS STATEMENTS BY WORLD LEADERS, CBW USE HAS NOT STOPPED IN SEA OR AFGHANISTAN, AND IT CONTINUES TO CAUSE NUMEROUS DEATHS. HE THEN THANKED THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT FOR ITS STUDY ON CBW USE WHICH CLEARED UP SEVERAL TECHNICAL QUESTIONS THAT HAD BEEN PUZZLING OUR EXPERTS. CROCKER NOTED THAT THE DRAFT OF THE UPDATE TO THE MARCH 1982 REPORTS ON USE OF CBW IN AFGHANISTAN AND SEA IS NOT YET AVAILABLE. THE USG HAD NOT BEEN PLANNING TO PRESENT IT SO QUICKLY, BUT FOR TACTICAL REASONS, WE NOW WISH TO PRESENT IT TO THE UNGA BY THE 2ND WEEK OF NOVEMBER.

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5. TURNING TO THE EVIDENCE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT, CROCKER EXPLAINED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN ATTACKS IN LAOS SINCE 1975, AND THIS YEAR THERE HAVE BEEN ATTACKS IN EVERY MONTH FROM JANUARY TO JUNE. WE ARE TODAY IN A FAR BETTER POSITION TO ACQUIRE AND ANALYZE EVIDENCE THAN EARLIER -- WE ARE ABLE TO RUSH EVIDENCE TAKEN FROM REFUGEES BACK TO LABORATORIES FOR ANALYSIS QUICKLY.

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WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT VIETNAM WILL USE CBW IN THEIR OFFENSIVE DURING THE UPCOMING DRY SEASON SINCE THE DR

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RESISTANCE CONTINUES TO HOLD ITS OWN. IN LAOS UNLESS THE ATTACKS ARE STOPPED SOON, IT COULD MEAN THE END OF THE HMONG PEOPLE. IN AFGHANISTAN, DESPITE A DECLINE IN NUMBER OF REPORTS OF CBW USE THIS YEAR, WE BELIEVE THE SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN CHEMICAL AGENTS TO AFGHAN FORCES AND THAT WITH THOSE AGENTS ATTACKS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AS RECENTLY AS SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR.

6. CROCKER CONCLUDED HIS PRESENTATION BY NOTING THAT THE U.S. HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO ISSUE A STRONG STATEMENT; WE MUST CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT AT THE LACK OF SOVIET RESPONSE UNTIL NOW TO INTERNATIONAL OUTRAGE. THEY THINK THEY CAN COUNTER WITH CHARGES OF U.S. USE OF AGENT ORANGE IN VIETNAM AND WITH FABRICATIONS OF OTHER SUPPOSED INSTANCES OR THAT WE WILL FORGET ABOUT SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN. THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESENT OUR CASE TO THE PUBLIC. CROCKER CONCLUDED BY THANKING OTHER GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR AID IN RESEARCH ON THIS COMPLEX ISSUE.

7. TO PRESENT AN EXPLANATION OF OUR METHODOLOGY AND PROOFS. HE NOTED THAT ON HIS PREVIOUS VISITS TO NATO HE HAD BEEN LIMITED IN WHAT

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EVIDENCE WE COULD PRESENT -- ALL OF OUR EVIDENCE SUFFERED FROM A LIMITED NUMBER OF EXAMPLES AND THE FACT THAT IT WAS INDIRECT. TODAY THE U.S. CAN REPORT STRIKING PROGRESS IN RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF CBW USE.

FOR EVIDENCE TO BE PERSUASIVE ON A QUESTION LIKE THIS, THERE SHOULD BE FOUR SPECIFIC KINDS OF "PROOFS":

- 1) SAMPLES FROM ATTACK SITES;
- 2) ORAL INTERVIEWS WITH VICTIMS SHORTLY AFTER THE PERIOD OF ATTACK;
- 3) CLINICAL MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL EVIDENCE (SAMPLES OF BLOOD, TISSUE, URINE, WITH GOOD HISTORIES AND PHYSICAL EXAMS);
- 4) AUTOPSY ANALYSIS OF TISSUES TO SHOW CORRELATION OF SAMPLE EVIDENCE WITH THE OTHER PROOFS. IN AFGHANISTAN AND SEA WE HAVE ACHIEVED SOLID EVIDENCE IN THESE AREAS.

8. IN SEA, THANKS ESPECIALLY TO THE ASSISTANCE OF THE THAI GOVERNMENT, WE ARE OFTEN ABLE TO OBTAIN EVIDENCE FROM VICTIMS WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THEIR ENTRY IN THAILAND;

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THEY ARE SCREENED BY MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND THE PERSONS SHOWING SYMPTOMS OF CBW ATTACKS ARE IMMEDIATELY TRANSFERRED

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TO INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL FACILITIES. ACUTELY ILL PEOPLE ARE THEN SEPARATED FOR ADDITIONAL MEDICAL CARE AND INVESTIGATION. THIS SYSTEM ENABLES US TO COLLECT EVIDENCE FROM VICTIMS WITHIN 2-4 WEEKS FOLLOWING AN ATTACK. THESE INVESTIGATIONS SHOW POSITIVE EVIDENCE OF TRICHOHECENE TOXINS FROM BLOOD, URINE, AND TISSUES. FOR EXAMPLE, FROM FOUR ATTACKS IN LAOS VICTIMS WERE INTERVIEWED, SAMPLES AND POST MORTEM MATERIAL OBTAINED, PRESERVED AND TAKEN TO THE U.S. FOR ANALYSIS. THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT SHOWS THAT THE VICTIMS HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO TRICHOHECENE TOXINS. THE USG HAS ALSO RECENTLY RECEIVED ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE FROM KAMPUCHEA IN WHICH HIGH LEVELS OF MYCO-TOXINS ARE SEEN IN BLOOD, TISSUE, AND AUTOPSY SPECIMENS FROM THE VICTIMS. OFFERED INFORMATION OF THE BACKGROUND OF SOVIET INTEREST IN CBW WEAPONS WHICH HE NOTED, INTER ALIA, DATED AS FAR BACK AS THE LATE 1940S WITH DOCTRINAL PAPERS AND EXPERIMENTATION BEGINNING IN THE 1950S AND PRODUCTION OF MYCOTOXINS BEING UNDERTAKEN IN THE 1960S.

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9. DR. SARVER REPORTED THAT IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC PRESENTATION, THREE PAPERS ARE SHORTLY TO BE PUBLISHED BY SCIENTISTS IN TECHNICAL, OPEN JOURNALS THAT WILL PRESENT CORROBORATION OF USG CONCLUSIONS ON THE RECENT USE OF CBW IN SEA. THE CASE OF AFGHANISTAN IS NOT AS CLEAR CUT DUE TO THE FEWER NUMBER OF SAMPLES AVAILABLE. AS AN EXAMPLE, OF THE 29 SAMPLES THIS YEAR SENT TO US FOR EXAMINATION THERE WERE 57 "ITEMS" STUDIED, OF THESE 50 WERE FROM SEA AND 7 FROM AFGHANISTAN. DR. SARVER THEN PRESENTED TECHNICAL DETAILS OF NEW EVIDENCE FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN INDICATING MYCOTOXIN IN ALL THREE

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11. THE THIRD QUESTION DEALT WITH THE PROBLEM OF IDENTIFYING SAMPLES. CROCKER REPLIED THAT ANY SINGLE

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PIECE OF EVIDENCE CAN BE DISCOUNTED OR IGNORED BY SOMEONE WHO WISHES TO DO SO. HOWEVER, IT IS THE ENTIRE PACKAGE OF EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE PRESENTING THAT PROVIDES THE PROOF OF OUR CLAIMS ON SOVIET/SURROGATE CBW USE. IN PARTICULAR, HE EMPHASIZED THE PRESENCE OF TOXINS IN TISSUE AND BLOOD IS IRREFUTABLE PROOF, UNLESS ONE WISHES TO ASSUME THAT THE VICTIMS INJECTED THEMSELVES WITH LETHAL AMOUNTS OF TOXIC CHEMICALS. I ADDED THAT THE MOUNTING LEVEL OF CLINICAL EVIDENCE NOW AVAILABLE IN SCORES OF CASES PLACES BEYOND CHALLENGE OUR CASE THAT CBW ARE BEING USED IN SEA AND AFGHANISTAN.

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15. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. BENNETT

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