DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TELEGR
11/4/83
(4Y1), (2Y3), (1Y6)
( ) CLASSIFY AS
( ) DOWNGRADE TO
DADR

CONFIDENTIAL

AN: DB30696-0031

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GENEVA 10936 01 OF 02 2517477
ACTION PM-08

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
EB-08 EA-10 DODE-00 H-01 ID-15 NSAE-00 L-03
DOE-10 EPA-01 SAL-01 DES-09 AIDA-12 SP-02 NRC-02
SNP-01 /116 W
-----------------230445 2613052 /41

R 2517417 NOV 83
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9238
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 10936

STATE FOR PM (COL. JAMES LEONARD) AND INR (ROBERT STRAND)

STATE PLEASE PASS ACDA (ROBERT MIKULAK/CAROLYN STEITNER).
STATE PLEASE PASS CIA [redacted]
STATE PLEASE PASS DIA/DT (GENE HENDERSON-PASS TO SHARON WATSON/WILLIAM SARVER)

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PINR, PINS, MCAP
SUBJECT: PROFESSOR MESELSON BRIEFING IN GENEVA ON -- "YELLOW RAIN"

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT) ACTION REQUESTED PARA 12.

2. FOLLOWING REPORT WAS DRAFTED BY GARY CROCKER, INR OFFICER, CURRENTLY IN GENEVA FOR ONE YEAR PARTICIPATING IN EXCEPTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ANALYST PROGRAM ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

3. MATTHEW MESELSON, PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY AT HARVARD, INFORMED CROCKER ON NOVEMBER 9 OF HIS LATEST ANALYSIS ON "YELLOW RAIN". MESELSON SAID HE WAS IN GENEVA TO GIVE A
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GENEVA 10936 01 OF 02 2517477

MEMORIAL LECTURE IN HONOR OF A BIOLOGIST FRIEND FROM WHO-

MARTIN KAPLAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PUGWASH CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND WORLD AFFAIRS, ASKED MESELSON TO BRIEF ABOUT TWENTY SELECTED OFFICIALS FROM THE MISSIONS TO THE UN.

4. THE MISSION LEARNED ABOUT THE BRIEFING FROM CANADIAN AMBASSADOR BEASLEY. AMBASSADOR SWAEBE ARRANGED FOR CROCKER TO BRIEF THE CANADIAN MISSION.

[redacted]

5. MESELSON TALKED FOR ALMOST AN HOUR, USING 35 MM SLIDES OF VEGETATION SAMPLES AND A CAPSULE CONTAINING THREE SOUTHEAST ASIAN BEES, LEAVING ONLY A FEW MINUTES FOR QUESTIONS BEFORE EVERYONE LEFT. AT THE END, KAPLAN SAID THAT THE US GOVERNMENT'S CHARGES ABOUT "YELLOW RAIN" HAD "POISONED" THE ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA AND HE WAS GLAD THAT MESELSON HAD ACCUMULATED EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT "YELLOW RAIN" WAS NATURAL, NOT CHEMICAL WARFARE.

[redacted] KAPLAN COMMENTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING THIS SUMMER ON VERIFICATION ISSUES. KAPLAN DID AGREE TO PROVIDE ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE BRIEFING WITH COPIES OF THE U.S. DOCUMENTS AND AGREED TO ANOTHER MEETING WITH CROCKER.

6. IT IS CROCKER'S UNDERSTANDING THAT MESELSON HAS PRESENTED HIS FINDINGS AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE HIS BRIEFING. CROCKER WAS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

STRUCK BY THE EXTENSIVE RESEARCH MESELSON HAS DONE ON HIS BEE HYPOTHESIS. HIS SPECULATION ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF TOXINS IN THE BLOOD SAMPLES AND HIS THEORY THAT THE H'MONG AND CAMBODIANS MAY BE SUFFERING FROM PELLEGRA IS LESS WELL DEVELOPED, ALTHOUGH TO THE UNINFORMED HIS ANALYSIS IS QUITE PERSUASIVE. HE USES THE 1977 CHINESE PAPER, IN WHICH "YELLOW RAIN" IN CHINA WAS FOUND TO BE CAUSED BY BEES, AS THE CLINCHER THAT HIS HYPOTHESIS IS CORRECT. INDIAN FINDINGS OF T2 TOXIN IN THE HOT CLIMATE OF HYDERBAD, WHERE PEOPLE REPORTEDLY SUFFER FROM PELLEGRA,

WAS CITED AS EVIDENCE THAT MYCOTOXINS COULD FLOURISH IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

7. CROCKER WAS NOT GIVEN TIME TO SPEAK AT THE BRIEFING. MESELSON USED PAST STATEMENTS BY U.S. AND CANADIAN OFFICIALS TO SUBSTANTIATE HIS ANALYSIS. FOR EXAMPLE, DR. SARVER OF CSL WAS QUOTED AS AGREEING THAT BEE DROPPINGS WERE IN SOME OF THE SAMPLES. A STATEMENT OF CROCKER'S AT A 1982 PRESS BRIEFING CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF INSECT BORNE POLLEN WAS CITED AS AN EARLY INDICATION THAT BEES WERE INVOLVED. HOWEVER, MESELSON IGNORES OR APPEARS UNAWARE OF MANY KEY POINTS IN THE U.S. AND CANADIAN EVIDENCE. HE ONLY SHOWS LEAVES WITH SINGLE YELLOW SPOTS, WHICH MATCH SAMPLES OF BEE DROPPINGS COLLECTED AT HARVARD. HE SAYS THAT THE LEAVES FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA WERE SUPPLIED BY THE CANADIANS AND THE AUSTRALIANS. HE SAYS THAT HE HAS NEVER SEEN A VEGETATION SAMPLE COVERED WITH MANY YELLOW SPOTS LIKE THOSE ANALYZED IN THE U.S. AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES. HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE FEBRUARY 19 ATTACK IN THAILAND IS NOT IN ACCORD WITH FIRST-HAND CANADIAN OR UN REPORTS. HE NEVER MENTIONS REPORTS OF CHEMICAL AGENTS BEING DISPERSED BY BOMBS, ROCKETS, ARTILLERY, MINES OR MEANS OTHER THAN SPRAYING.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GENEVA 10936 02 OF 02 2517487

ACTION PM-08

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
EB-08 EA-10 DODE-00 H-01 IO-15 NSAE-00 L-03
DOE-10 EPA-01 SAL-01 OES-09 ACDA-12 SP-02 NRC-02
SNP-01 /116 W

230450 2613057 /41

R 251741Z NOV 83
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9239
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 GENEVA 10936

STATE FOR PM (COL. JAMES LEONARD) AND INR (ROBERT STRAND)

STATE PLEASE PASS ACDA (ROBERT MIKULAK/CAROLYN STETTNER).
STATE PLEASE PASS CIA/OSI (DR. CHRISTOPHER GREEN.
STATE PLEASE PASS DIA/DT (GENE HENDERSON-PASS TO SHARON WATSON/WILLIAM SARVER)

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PINR, PINS, MCAP
SUBJECT: PROFESSOR MESELSON BRIEFING IN GENEVA ON

PROBABLY BECAUSE IT WOULD BE HARD TO CORRELATE SUCH ATTACKS WITH BEE DROPPINGS. FURTHERMORE, HE DOES NOT DISCUSS AFGHANISTAN. AT THE MIT CONFERENCE IN APRIL 1983, THE CHAIRMAN RULED THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED. THE BEE THEORY WAS BORN AT THIS CONFERENCE AFTER A BRIEFING BY PETER ASHTON OF THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM.

8. MESELSON DID NOT HAVE GOOD ANSWERS TO A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS POSED BY CROCKER. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAS NO IDEA HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE FOR MYCOTOXINS TO FORM ON BEE DROPPINGS. THIS IS A CRITICAL POINT IN THOSE CASES
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GENEVA 10936 02 OF 02 2517487

WHERE VEGETATION SAMPLES WERE COLLECTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER AN ATTACK. HE CANNOT EXPLAIN WHY THE CHINESE STUDY SAYS

THE "YELLOW RAIN" FROM BEES WAS IN SEPTEMBER, WHEN HIS HYPOTHESIS HINGES ON THE BEE PHENOMENA OCCURRING ONLY IN THE SPRING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. IF THE H'MONG HAVE INCORRECTLY CORRELATED BEE DROPPINGS WITH CHEMICAL WARFARE AGENTS, WHY HAS "YELLOW RAIN" BEEN REPORTED TO OCCUR ALL YEAR LONG. HIS WRITTEN REPORTS LUMP ALL HUMAN REPORTING IN THE CATEGORY OF REFUGEE STORIES. HE HAS NO EXPLANATION FOR THE DEFECTOR REPORTS FROM ALL THREE COUNTRIES OR THE TESTIMONY OF DOCTORS AND JOURNALISTS.

9. MESELSON QUOTES FROM THE CANADIAN STUDY OF THE FEBRUARY 19, 1982 INCIDENT IN THAILAND. HE SAYS THAT THE SINGLE YELLOW SPOTS FOUND ON THE LEAVES WERE FROM AN AREA OF ABOUT 100 SQUARE METERS, WHICH ACCORDS WITH STUDIES AT HARVARD OF DROPPINGS AROUND BEE HIVES. ACTUALLY, TWO OTHER VILLAGES WERE HIT AT THE SAME TIME WITH A YELLOW MATERIAL. THAI OFFICIALS WHO WENT INTO THE AREA HAVE DESCRIBED A YELLOW POWDER COVERING THE AREA, NOT SINGLE YELLOW SPOTS.

10. MESELSON'S BRIEFING DISPUTES THE FINDINGS OF EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATION UNDERTAKEN BY THE U.S., CANADA AND OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY WITH THOSE NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE EVIDENCE. MOREOVER, DESPITE THE INITIATIVES THAT THE U.S. DELEGATION UNDERTOOK IN THE SUMMER SESSION OF THE CD (AND THE LACK OF SOVIET INITIATIVES), THERE ARE STILL MANY ARMS CONTROL OFFICIALS IN EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE WHO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS WERE FORTHCOMING AND THE U.S. WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BLOCKING PROGRESS ON DRAFTING A TREATY. THEREFORE, THERE IS FERTILE GROUND FOR MESELSON TO CONVINCE PEOPLE IN EUROPE THAT HIS ANALYSIS IS CORRECT AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS PREMATURELY CHARGED THE SOVIETS WITH TREATY VIOLATIONS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

11. MESELSON TOLD CROCKER THAT HE IS NOW READY TO ACCEPT CIA'S OFFER OF A CLASSIFIED BRIEFING. HE SAID HE HAD SPENT MANY HOURS WITH DR. PITROCHA AND NOW THINKS THAT PITROCHA HAS PERFORMED FAULTY ANALYSIS. IT IS INTERESTING, HOWEVER, THAT HE QUOTES PITROCHA'S 1976 STUDY ON TOXINS IN COWS AS PROOF THAT T2 DOES NOT REMAIN LONG IN THE BODY. MESELSON STATES HE IS STILL UNAWARE OF THE ANIMAL STUDIES DONE BY THE U.S. ARMY. HE ALSO STATED THAT THE NATIONAL

CONFIDENTIAL

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES REPORT WAS DEVOID OF ANY REAL ANALYSIS.

12. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE DEPARTMENT WOULD KEEP THE U.S. MISSION INFORMED OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CW USE ISSUE. NEW STUDIES, LIKE THE NATIONAL ACADEMY REPORT, WOULD BE USEFUL IN BRIEFING INTERESTED DELEGATIONS. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE RECEIVING TALKING POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON MESELSON'S ANALYSIS VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. POSITION ON THE CW USE ISSUE.
SWAEBE