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TAGS: MOPS, PARM, PINR, SHUM, CB, TH, VM, UR, SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH PRESS REPORT ON POSSIBLE NERVE GAS USE
IN KAMPUCHEA

1. THE FOLLOWING STORY APPEARED IN THE SWEDISH DAILY
"SVENSKA DAGBLADET" OF FEBRUARY 10. IT ACCOMPANIES AN
AFP REPORT CITING THAI REPORTS OF POSSIBLE NERVE GAS USE
AGAINST THE KHMER ROUGE BY THE VIETNAMESE.

2. BEGIN TEXT

SOLDIERS WALKED INTO INVISIBLE WALL

FREELANCE JOURNALIST STAFFAN DAHLLOF, WHO IN TWO ARTICLES
HAS DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AMONG THE KHMER ROUGE IN
WESTERN KAMPUCHEA, HAS ALSO RECEIVED INFORMATION WHICH
MIGHT INDICATE THAT THE VIETNAMESE USE NERVE GAS IN THE
WAR AGAINST THE GUERRILLAS.

-- "AROUND VIETNAM'S 479TH ARMY HEADQUARTERS IN SIEM
REAP OUR SOLDIERS HAVE ENCOUNTERED AN 'INVISIBLE WALL,'"
SAYS THE PHYSICIAN THIOUNN THIOEUN, WHO ALSO IS MINISTER
OF HEALTH IN THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT'S COALITION

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GOVERNMENT.

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FOI, EO or PA exemptions _____ IS authority to _____
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-- "THOSE WHO ENTERED THE AREA FELL DOWN DEAD IN A FEW MINUTES, AFTER VIOLENT CONVULSIONS. THEY HAD NOT NOTICED ANY USE OF ARMS BY THE VIETNAMESE."

IF THE STORIES ARE CORRECT IT COULD INDICATE THE USE OF NERVE GASES LIKE SARIN AND SOMAN, SOLUBLE IN JELLY. THESE REMAIN ON THE GROUND AND VEGETATION A LONG TIME AFTER SPREADING AND ARE ACTIVATED ONLY AFTER TOUCH.

CONSIDERING VIETNAM'S LOW LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT IT IS NOT VERY LIKELY THAT VIETNAM COULD PRODUCE NERVE GASES OR OTHER CHEMICAL WAR PRODUCTS. SINCE THE SOVIET UNION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALMOST ALL DELIVERIES OF WAR MATERIEL TO VIETNAM IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE SUBSTANCE USED COULD BE THE SOVIET MADE GAS SOMAN/YR-55.

EVER SINCE THE INVASION OF KAMPUCHEA IN 1979 SOLDIERS FROM THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT HAVE REPORTED THAT THEY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO "YELLOW RAIN" SPREAD VIA ARTILLERY SHELLS AND ROCKET LAUNCHERS. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED HAVE SUFFERED FROM VIOLENT VOMITING, DIFFICULTIES IN BREATHING, AND A BURNING SENSATION THROUGHOUT THE BODY. IN SEVERE CASES THERE IS BLEEDING FROM ALL APERTURES.

THE MORTALITY RATE HAS BEEN HIGH AS A RESULT OF BLEEDING TO DEATH OR SUFFOCATION BECAUSE OF BLOOD-FILLED LUNGS. THE SYMPTOMS HAVE LED MEDICAL AND MILITARY EXPERTS TO SUSPECT TRICHOHECENE, SYNTHETICALLY PRODUCED FUNGOUS POISON. AMERICAN ANALYSIS OF BODY TISSUES FROM ALLEGED VICTIMS HAVE ALSO SHOWN BREAK-DOWN PRODUCTS OF TRICHOHECENE.

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-- "EVEN IF WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PROVE THE PRESENCE OF TRICHOHECENE THE ATTENTION OF THE WESTERN WORLD HAS MADE THE VIETNAMESE MORE RESTRAINED," SAYS THIOUNN THIOEUN. "NOW FEWER SOLDIERS DIE FROM GAS ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND WE HAVE NOT HAD ANY 'YELLOW RAIN' CLOSE TO THE THAI BORDER."

END TEXT.
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