

Zulkerman

August 2, 1969

Dear Sir Solly,

The quantity and manner of use of CS in Vietnam has escalated rapidly since 1964. The essential facts are not classified and are now coming to public attention.

Army procurement of CS has risen from 367,000 lbs in FY1964 to 6,063,000 lbs in FY1969. The total procured during the period FY1964-69 amounted to 13,736,000 lbs. Procurement is a very good indicator of field use; very little is stockpiled.

There has been a rapid multiplication of CS munitions, there being about twenty now in the field. These range from grenades to 155 mm Howitzer shells and aircraft cluster bombs. (Detailed descriptions and use concepts are in Army Training Circular FC 3-16, April, 1969.) En Nearly all CS is now used in regular military operations. These operations are unrelated to the original announced intention of using CS to separate enemy soldiers from civilians. Enemy troops are becoming supplied with masks and have occasionally used harassing gas but I do not have any quantitative information on these points.

I spoke at length with Hope-Jones in Geneva. I told him of the situation in some detail and made the following points:

1. Our overriding interest in the CBW field is to keep non-nuclear nations from acquiring CB capabilities. The restraints against such a development are largely psychological. We should maintain and reinforce them. The world tends to think of CB weapons as a class,

whether or not it is 'rational' to do so. This is in our interests. Once any form of CBW becomes well-established, escalation will be difficult to prevent.

By far the most immediate and important CBW arms control problem at present is to keep harassing gases from coming into routine military use. We do not gain any major military advantage from using harassing gases and, once an enemy masks, this decreases almost to zero.

2. There is a real chance of persuading the United States of the above, if the Vietnam war draws to a close. The long-term importance of the issue justifies trying to do so.

3. The position of Britain among Western nations and her clear policy on tear gas in the 1930's place her in a position to be particularly influential with the United States.

4. While seeking support for the United Kingdom Treaty on Biological weapons, nothing should be done that might facilitate the acceptance of harassing gas in war or that might prevent a uniform interpretation of the Geneva Protocol.

I have sent one copy of this to Norfolk and another to you at the Cabinet Office.

Sincerely yours,