

February 10, 1970

Mr. Doménic Flessati  
BBC  
Bush House  
London, W.C.2  
England

Dear Nic,

Here is a copy of a letter to the London Times from Richard Baxter and me regarding the British Government's abysmal policy on CS. Richard Baxter is one of the most distinguished American authorities on the law of war. I hope that the Times will see fit to print our letter.

I also enclose a copy of an Edgewood study of the effects of CS on skin. The color photos I enclose are not high quality. I shall send you a better set within a week. The exposures required for this skin effect are quite intense but by no means are they unreachable in the open field, let alone in enclosed spaces. Note the description of an accident during field exercises given on pages 25-26.

The skin of the neck and certain other parts of the body are considerably more sensitive than is the arm. I should think that the membranes of the respiratory tract are more sensitive yet. The Ct received by volunteer number 9 would be achieved in one minute if one hundred grams of CS were dispersed in a room four or five times larger than your office at the BBC. The U.S. Army standard M7 CS grenade contains 115 gms of CS. As you know, there are much larger CS munitions deployed in Vietnam. For example, the XM925 bomb delivers 80 lbs of CS. Helicopters are routinely loaded with thirty such bombs. Mr. Stewart's view that CS is "not significantly harmful to man" under wartime conditions is of course totally without foundation.

There have been many deaths due to CS in Vietnam but there is a general understanding that they are not to be reported. I enclose one of the few

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printed references to such deaths along with an item from the U.S. publication "War/PeaceReport".

The Himsworth Commission has not submitted its final report, as you know. They have not reached a final conclusion regarding the toxicity of CS and have not even finished their series of meetings. I am reliably informed that the Commission was not consulted in connection with the policy announced by Mr. Stewart.

Of course, toxicity is not the principle issue when CS is used in war. Why is it so difficult for many intelligent persons to comprehend this simple distinction?

In addition to the items mentioned above, I enclose some others for your possible interest.

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,

Matthew Meselson

MM:ls  
Encl.