



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

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FOR CN PP

19 MAY 1970-

Professor Matthew Messelson
The Biological Laboratories
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Matt:

Inclosed are some comments on your paper on "Policy Considerations Regarding the Use of Riot Control Chemicals in War" which I promised to send to you in my letter of 13 May. Even though there is a basic difference in our views, I hope they will prove useful to you.

Sincerely,

1 Incl
As stated

Bill Stone
WILLIAM W. STONE, JR.
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Director, Chemical and Nuclear
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Copy furnished:
Dr. Herbert Scoville, Jr.

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COMMENTS ON "POLICY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF
RIOT CONTROL CHEMICALS IN WAR"

The author's concern is with discouraging the proliferation of CB weapons and the prevention of their use. In proposing his thesis, he assumes that the US use of RCA's tends both to hasten proliferation of CB weapons and deter attainment of arms control measures. Although there has been talk of proliferation beyond RCA's, there has been none since their use began in 1965. More important, notwithstanding his views on the importance of cessation of the use of RCA's in aiding arms control, a far more significant step was taken by the US in the arms control field when the President renounced the production and use of BW. Certainly this should have demonstrated, psychologically and politically, US intentions as a "humanitarian and restrained" nation. Yet our action, contrary to motivating our potential enemies to renounce BW, has rather made them suspicious of our action - even to the point of questioning our integrity by giving up a weapon for which they question the military value and then seeking to persuade other countries at the CCD to also renounce BW.

Thus the image that the author wishes the US to demonstrate as a motivator of arms control measures through the renunciation of RCA's has already been demonstrated through the renunciation of a far more potent weapon, namely BW.

The attitudes of nations, since the US policy announcement in November 1969, as well as in the years previous, indicate that national security interests rather than the US's renunciation of RCA's will dictate proliferation or nonproliferation and the arms control measures that will be taken by both small and powerful countries.

The paper makes several other points:

- a. RCA's have only a limited application.
- b. Our use of CS will invite other nations to prepare for chemical warfare.
- c. Our international image has been tarnished.

The discussion is based on strong preconceived views, and conclusions made are not supported by facts. The fact is that RCA's have had considerable utility in SVN. They would not be effective against a sophisticated, protected enemy but they are ideal in low order conflicts against unprotected insurgents.

Most of the major nations have considerable knowledge of chemical warfare, and have prepared at least defensively for it, long before we initiated use of RCA's. Except for the Communist propaganda campaign against us, world reaction was actually low-keyed. A very effective propaganda effort has tarnished our image not solely because of our use of RCA's but mostly because we are attempting to defeat Communist aggression.

Page 14: One viewpoint on risks to damaging our standing in world opinion is that the biggest damage comes from the propaganda, half-truths and biased statements made by "experts," or by those who want peace at any price, or who want unilateral disarmament, and who believe, perhaps sincerely, that "negotiation from weakness" is the right path to peace.