

Revised by MSM,  
15 Feb 1986.

MemCon: Matthew MESELSON in London, 29-30 October 1985

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Going over the notes on the conversations he had had with CIEPCWC Conf participants in Stockholm, 23-27 Oct 85.

1. With Esmatg EZZ

a. On the Yemen CW, his story now was that

- i From his subsequent experience of dealings with the Sovs, he doubted very much whether they would ever have supplied Egypt with CW weapons, for that would risk putting events too much out of their control.
- ii At the time he had not been in a position to know anything about it; he was attending a college.

So, he did not confirm what MSM thought Amb Jim Leonard had heard privately from the Egyptian UN ambassador of the time (? Saadi), namely that the Egyptians had indeed been doing what he as ambassador had formally been denying in public, but learned of only much later.

b. On the Yellow Rain:

- i He is keen to go ahead with the projected SIPRI scheme of his writing up his personal experiences with the UN expert investigating group. The fact that, when he had mentioned the project to Jan Maartensson the latter had strongly discouraged him, simply made him keener to go ahead.
- ii Shirley Freeman had written to him to say that the Australians had never found any trichoths in any of the samples they had put through GC/MS; and she had enclosed a copy of a secret Oz report to that effect. Ezz would copy her letter to MSM.
- iii He had had a letter from Schieffer/Sutherland about their T2-positive; didn't recall whether the sample had been collected as a control or as an actual YR-agent residue. Would copy the letter to MSM.

iv He had some photomicrographs of samples that he would send to MSM.

v The Thai positive had come from TLC only-- $R_f$  measurement only/  
and therefore meaningless. *and without any authentic standards,*

vi He thought poorly of the British doctor at Ban Vinai (40-50 years old, typically Brit: ? Derek Bird--if so, the man who had been collecting samples for the Brit Bangkok Embassy). This doctor had told him that he had seen signs and symptoms strongly indicative of CW; but when Ezz had looked at his case notes he could find no mention. So he suspected the doctor of prejudice.

vii The three analysts used by UNEIG, other than FOA, were ENARI (Finland), SHOE (Austria) and UENO (Japan). UENO had found trichoths even in the blanks; the other two had failed to find trichoths even in the spiked samples.

2. With Johan SANTESSON (25 & 26 Oct)

- a. He knew of only two trichoth-positive YR findings outside the USA, other than Heyndrickx. They were both environmental samples. Neither lab was of top quality, nor experienced in such analyses. For one of them, the lab itself had cautioned against accepting the positive as sure.
- b. FOA had found CS in samples from SEA--white deposits. The CS was siliconized. /NOTE: In Washington a few weeks previously, Colonel LAMBERT of State/PMA had told MSM that CS was the only CW agent which USG knew definitely to have been used./
- c. FOA had had no trichoth-positives. Had looked at at least 12 (maybe as many as 50) environmental samples from SEA; and had also tested some bloods and urines. Details:
- i Most of the enviro samples were predominantly pollen. *Knows of no yellow samples that were not. Almost all the samples were yellow. One was purple, some were white.*
  - ii Samples arriving at FOA were dried over  $P_2O_5$  in vacuo and stored frozen.
  - iii Had never found PEG. Often found phthalates, attributed to the plastic bags.
  - iv FOA had begun trichoth analyses in Sept 1981, but had taken about a year to get upto scratch.
  - v FOA used a sequential method. First GC; then medium-resolution GC/MS on any apparent positives; then high-resolution GC/MS *(1:50:100)*, a stage reached by a number of what were then shown to be false positives.
  - vi On the enviro samples, FOA's sensitivity was in the 1-10 ppm range; *about 12 had been run at <0.1 ppm, the rest at higher limits of detection.*
  - vii FOA had run some aging experiments on T2 in soil, putting it through a temperature/humidity cycle. Had found rather rapid decomposition (MSM has details).
- d. FOA is doing no trichoth studies as part of its defensive R & D. Nor would it do so even if its budget were doubled.
- e. That Thai woman D Phil student's dissertation had either been rejected or withdrawn.

[MSM to check this further]

3. With Graham COOPER (23 & 25x Oct)

- a. He knew of no European trichoth-positives in YR samples--but he would not necessarily know of them.
- b. He knew of no yellow YR samples that did not show pollen.
- c. Dubious of the value of trichoths as CW agents.
- d. ~~Had~~ <sup>Rec.</sup> read MSM's memorandum <sup>from</sup> ~~on~~ his Porton visit: it was 'without error'. The sensitivity (still great) lay in any suggestion of actual CDE findings--e.g. Porton's 'believing' something.

4. With Jack OOMS (26 Oct)

- a. The Dutch had not analysed any SEA samples *for trichothecenes.*
- b. His lab had, however, done analyses of trichoth-spiked samples that Mirocha had also analysed. Positives were indeed reported but at lower levels than Mirocha reported.
- c. He knew of only two non-US trichoth-positives (other than Heyndrickx's):
  - i. The French, looking at a number of samples, had reported 0.1 ppm T2 in a single sample (spotted leaf from Thailand). But their analyst had cautioned against importance being attached to this finding.
  - ii. Ron Sutherland in Schieffer's lab, looking at a yellow material. ~~powder (?)~~
- d. He knew of no FRG trichoth analyses.
- e. He thought that the Canadian work on YR samples at DREO had yielded no positives.
- f. The Dutch had concluded that trichoths were unlikely CW agents. ~~And NATO had decided against including trichoths~~ *in its threat list. (was not on the NATO)*

5. With Merv HAMBLIN (25-26 Oct)

- a. Was markedly constrained in commenting on Canadian YR work. But he verified MSM's notes of their conversations.
- b. Canadian Government work on YR analyses was done in two places:
  - i. DREO. But Merv felt himself precluded from saying anything about results.
  - ii. Agriculture Canada. Had never found any trichoth-positives. But their work had got interrupted by a Canadian fusarial outbreak. Some of their results had, however, been sufficiently 'funny' for DREO to repeat the work.
- c. He knew of <sup>yellow</sup> no samples from alleged attack sites that did not have a high pollen content.
- d. But he knew of some samples [of alleged agent] for which "not analyses, not results, but "observations" were not necessarily consistent with bee faeces". Was not sure whether these samples contained pollen or not.

6. With Ichiro AKIYAMA

- a. Only UENO has been looking at YR samples. His results are in the UNEIG report. He says he would have no confidence in findings from any samples that he himself had not gathered,
- b. Japan does not collect YR samples.

7. With RAMACHANDRAN (25 Oct)

- a. India does no YR sample analysis.