

BRIEFING PAPER
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Iraqi Illegal Use of Chemical Weapons (CW)

I. Background:

o ~~On November 1983~~ we concluded that Iraq had used domestically-produced lethal CW in its war with Iran ~~beginning in 1980~~. Such use violates the 1925 Geneva Protocol, to which Iraq and Iran are Parties. The Protocol prohibits first use but not possession of CW nor its retaliatory use. (b)(1)

o The Iraqi CW capability was developed in part through the unwitting and, in some cases, we believe witting assistance of a number of Western firms ~~in the United States~~. We have approached the relevant States on the involvement of their national firms. (b)(1)

o On November 21, 1983, in Baghdad, we presented a demarche telling the Iraqis that we knew of their use of CW and strongly opposed it as a matter of principle. Other demarches to the same effect followed in succeeding months. We believe Iraqi CW use ceased after our November demarche but began again when Iran launched its February 1984 offensive. (b)(1)

o As a result of Iraq's renewed CW use in February, we publicly condemned Baghdad for using CW on March 5, 1984. Although adequately warned, Iraq expressed consternation with our action ~~and suggested that we should not name Iraq as the user~~. In subsequent contacts with Iraq, we have reiterated our opposition to their illegal use of CW. (b)(1)

Later in March, at the request of Iran, the UN Secretary General dispatched experts to Iran to investigate. The final report, submitted to the Security Council, concluded that lethal CW (both mustard and nerve agents) had been used but did not name Iraq as the user. Soon thereafter, the Security Council unanimously condemned CW use in the Gulf War, again without naming Iraq.

In March we also instituted export controls on certain chemicals suitable for the manufacture of CW to both Iraq and Iran and sought the establishment of

FROM DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/AMR

REV: 10/80 DATE 5/13/83

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EXEMPTIONS: 25X(1)(b)

REASON: []

EXEMPTIONS: 25X(1)(b)

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similar controls by other nations -- many have followed our lead.

- o To date, Iraq has not admitted, publicly or otherwise, to having or using CW. |

(b)(1)

II. Current Status

- o We know of no Iraqi CW use since the end of the spring Iranian offensive.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

- o Our efforts to curtail the flow of CW-related materials and to end the complicity of Western firms in the CW programs of Iraq and Iran have met with some success.

(b)(1)

However, because of the dual purpose nature of many materials, we cannot stop all shipments or technical assistance that might be used for CW purposes short of a complete trade embargo on both nations.

Fact Sheet - Iraqi CW Use - Visit of FM Aziz

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Clearances: PM: AKanter *for 2*
PM/TMP: OGrobel *for 2*
PM/NESA: PTheros *for 2*
INR/PMA: GCrocker *gsc*
NEA/ARN: FRicciardone *R*

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