

information about technical issues and environmental safety related to the destruction of those agents.¹⁷

Within Canada, serious concerns were raised in 1988 about the testing of chemical weapons (for more information, see **CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS** in the 1987-1988 and 1989 editions of *The Guide*). In June, it was revealed by a number of sources that the Department of National Defence had been testing nerve gas at the Canadian Forces Base Suffield, Alberta, since 1983. Although the Government stated that it had used only small quantities so as to find effective devices to protect Canadian troops against the possibility of such a threat (during peacekeeping operations, for example¹⁸), the fears concerning possible risk to neighbouring communities were not allayed. The Government subsequently asked Mr. William Barton, who was at the time Chairman of the Board of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, to prepare a report on research and training activities in the area of chemical and biological defence.

In December 1988, the Government published the results of Mr. Barton's study. The report, which was entitled *Research, Development and Training in Chemical Biological Defence Within the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces*, concluded that all research, development and training activities undertaken by the Department of National Defence were for purposes of self-defence, that this constituted the most prudent course for Canada, and that it was consistent with the international obligations undertaken by the Canadian Government. In addition, the study noted that all such activities were conducted in a professional manner, and posed no threat to public safety or to the environment. Nevertheless, it went on to list sixteen recommendations aimed at improving management, control and public understanding of the chemical and biological self-defence programme. These recommendations included: the tightening of safety procedures and physical security arrangements at the Defence Research Establishment, Suffield (DRES) and the Defence Research Establishment, Ottawa (DREO); reducing the number of outdoor tests at the Suffield base; and ensuring that all future testing procedures be conducted in accordance with the new *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*.¹⁹ On 25 January 1989, Mr. Beatty, who was then minister of National Defence, announced the Government's response to the Barton Report. He stated that he had accepted all sixteen recommendations made in the report and had directed that they be implemented without delay.²⁰

Meanwhile, during the fall of 1988, there were a number of reports that chemical weapons had been tested on human subjects at Suffield during the 1960s (see **CHEMICAL AND**

¹⁷ "Soviets Visit Defence Research Establishment Suffield." *The Disarmament Bulletin*, (Fall 1989), p. 6.

¹⁸ *Commons Debates*, 24 August 1988, p. 18803.

¹⁹ Department of National Defence, *Research, Development and Training in Chemical and Biological Defence within the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces: A Review by William H. Barton*. Ottawa, 31 December 1988.

²⁰ Department of National Defence, *News Release*, 25 January 1989, p. 1.