

Study of the Possible Use of Chemical  
Warfare Agents in Southeast Asia

Executive Summary

1. The events that are reported to take place at the time of alleged chemical warfare attacks cannot be explained on the basis of naturally occurring diseases. Neither mycotoxicoses nor other diseases occur in Southeast Asia which might be able to cause the rapid onset of symptoms or the effects on all sorts of forms of life (human, animal and plant life) that is reported to occur.
2. Judging on the basis of eyewitness reports it appears that three different types of agents have been employed as warfare agents, one of them being "Yellow Rain".
3. Most of the features described with "yellow rain" attacks are consistent with trichothecene mycotoxicosis.
4. The symptoms described are more consistent with Stachybotryotoxicosis, a disease caused by macrocyclic trichothecenes, rather than with symptoms attributed to other trichothecenes.
5. Although certain types of mycotoxins (e.g., aflatoxin, ochratoxin and possibly zearalenone) occur in Thailand and probably also in surrounding countries, there are no naturally occurring diseases with the symptomatology of trichothecene mycotoxicosis.
6. There is an urgent need to improve the verification and control procedures for chemical and/or biological warfare.

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