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24th August, 1944.

WAR CABINET

JOINT INTELLIGENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

USE OF CHEMICAL WARFARE BY THE GERMANS

Report by the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee

We have been asked by the Inter-Services Committee on Chemical Warfare whether we adhere to the views expressed in J.I.C. (44) 278 (O), dated 28th June, 1944. Our conclusion then was as follows:-

"We therefore conclude that the chances of the Germans initiating gas warfare have decreased, and that, in the only circumstances in which we envisage the slight possibility of the Germans deciding to use gas, they could not expect to achieve more than a temporary and tactical advantage from its use."

2. Since then the German Army in the West has suffered an overwhelming defeat, and has lost heavily in equipment and personnel. Its supply lines are thoroughly disorganized and will be increasingly exposed to Allied air attack and sabotage. It is thus in no condition nor in a position to initiate gas warfare effectively and would stand to lose more than it might gain from attempting such tactics.

3. The German Air Force is no more capable than on 28th June of carrying out gas warfare. On the contrary, as the Allied advance progresses, the German Air Force will find it increasingly difficult to operate either against the battle area or against the United Kingdom.

4. While anti-gas preparations inside Germany have continued, there is no sign of their being speeded up. Moreover such direct evidence as we have recently received of German intentions indicates that Germany has no intention of initiating gas warfare.

5. We therefore conclude that, although Hitler is faced with imminent military disaster - the only contingency in which we have envisaged him ordering gas warfare - the likelihood of the Germans initiating gas warfare has decreased.

(Signed) J.A. SINCLAIR
F.F. INGLIS
I.M.R. CAMPBELL (for DNI.)
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Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.

24th August, 1944.