

dup

26525

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

20 April 1949

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 163

SUBJECT: Foreign Activities in the Field of Biological Warfare (BW)\*

The attached report is in fulfillment of a request to prepare a study of activities in the USSR with respect to

- a. the history of BW organization, planning and research since the beginning of World War I
- b. the national policy governing research on, and employment of biological weapons.
- c. the current status of the BW programs.
- d. each country's military evaluation of this weapon from the standpoint of strategic importance and strategic employment

Document No. 008  
 NO CHANGE in Class.   
 DECLASSIFIED  
 Class. CHANGED TO: TS S (C)  
 DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77  
 Auth: DDA REG. 77/1765  
 Date: 6/1/78 By:

\*NOTE: Since October 1943 the Biological Warfare Intelligence Committee of the Central Intelligence Agency, composed of representatives of the CIA, the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force and the Department of the Navy has held frequent meetings to discuss developments in Biological Warfare intelligence. This special report is a product of their joint participation, with added assistance from members of the Research and Development Board.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

cy #6.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

21 APR 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: BW Intelligence Estimates

REFERENCE:

[Redacted]

b. Memorandum for Secretary of Defense from Director, Central Intelligence Agency, dated 18 April 1949

ENCLOSURE:

A. Fifteen copies IW-163, dated 20 April 1949: Foreign Activities in the Field of Biological Warfare

1. Enclosure A is forwarded in response to reference request.

[Redacted]

The copies of enclosures and subject IW-163 will be the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

OSI:WM/mtv

Distribution:

Director's File

AD/ORE

G/SI ✓

AD/OSI

Central Records

SIGNED

R. H. HILLENKOETTER  
REAR ADMIRAL, USN  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

This Document May Be Declassified  
Central Records, "Confidential" Upon Removal of  
Enclosure

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

I. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

No country in the world is now known to be prepared to use Biological Warfare openly. No country will admit intention to use BW as a weapon of offense, except in retaliation. Any country willing to sanction subversive, undercover use of BW can employ it at any time without fear of initial hindrance. Although untried, BW is regarded in all informed circles as a potentially powerful weapon.

Biological Warfare was recognized as a potential method of warfare during World War I, but no known organized efforts were made by any nation to develop it until after its use had been interdicted by international agreement. The League of Nations document of 1925 was ratified by 42 countries, but not by the United States or Japan.

vii. USSR

A. Organization

Limited information  sources indicates that the Russians began conducting BW research some time in the middle 1930's. The Germans were convinced that the USSR had BW installations on Gradomlya

Island in Lake Seliger, Vozrozhdeniya Island in Lake Aral, and at Schlusselfberg. The Japanese mentioned Vladivostok and Khabarovsk. None of these locations has yet been proved to have BW installations.

Recent reports from a [redacted] indicate that the Red Army has at least one BW research group located at Kuibyshev under the direction of Col. N. N. Ginsburg. It is believed that the First Chief Directorate of the USSR under Beriya, may be assisting the Red Army in procuring supplies for BW development.

B. Research and Development

Offense: There is no definite knowledge of the kinds of research and development now being undertaken by the USSR; it is certain only that research on BW is in progress. Russian scientists have published purely scientific reports on every pathogenic microorganism and toxin that could possibly be used as a BW agent; therefore, BW research of any kind may conceivably be in progress. Soviet interrogations of German and Japanese scientists demonstrated the Russian interest in plague, anthrax, and the intestinal diseases. The most reliable indication of current Soviet interest is derived from a report of Soviet experiments on the disinfection of wells. Some of these wells had been deliberately contaminated by an agent causing a violent and fatal intestinal disease. A recent unconfirmed report states that the Soviets have bombs for dissemination of biological agents. It is too soon, however, to assert that the Soviets are ready to use BW as a military weapon.

Defense: Practically nothing is known about Soviet research and development on defense against BW. Of course all usual medical research on infectious diseases and on public health facilities for controlling them may

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

be applied to BW defense.

There is only a rumor of the existence of military training for BW.  
No plans for civilian training are yet known.

C. National Policy

Nothing is known regarding political or military policy with respect  
to use of BW.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~