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Pact exercises and writings since at least the early sixties imply no significant role for the chemical troops in the wartime employment of toxic chemical agents and munitions as opposed to supporting their use by the combined arms forces. However, chemical land mines, if they are still to be used by the Pact,

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could be employed by chemical units. Additionally, chemical troops presumably would be involved in the ground-based spraying of poisonous or incapacitating gas, particularly from decontamination vehicles, if such operations were required. CIA Statute (90)

Defensive Training. 25X1

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General troop training is designed to familiarize personnel with the effects of "weapons of mass destruction" and with the use of individual protective equipment and unit reconnaissance and decontamination equipment. Chemical troop units receive extensive classroom training and also exercise their decontamination and detection skills in field exercises in the USSR and in Eastern Europe and at special chemical training centers, where they receive at least two weeks of major training each year. CIA Statute (92)

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Potential Use of Chemical Weapons in the European Battlefield:
The First Use Question

Soviet "declaratory" policy for chemical weapons has for years been one of "no first use." What the Soviets actually plan to do or would do under wartime conditions might well be different, but would be determined at the highest level of the Soviet leadership. The Soviet policy regarding first use of chemicals is not only a public policy: it is seen in exercises and instructional materials provided to students at high-level Soviet military academies. This may reflect Moscow's concern regarding compliance--or at least the appearance of compliance--with treaty obligations under the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which

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prohibits the "use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials, or devices." CIA Statute (158)

Evidence concerning Soviet enunciation of a "no first use" policy for internal military consumption dates from the pre-WWII period. A 1939 Soviet Air Force regulation, "The Chemical Arm of Red Army Air Forces," noted that:

"The Army of the Red Workers and Farmers shall not resort to the use of chemical warfare agents and weapons unless first used by the enemy. 'We will not, and have not the right to be surprised. . . , but should the aggressor dare to attack our people with chemical warfare agents, we shall retaliate by employing the terrible chemicals on him.' (K.E. Voroshilov)"

A 1941 Soviet General Staff directive, "The Chemical Arm in Combat and Operation," similarly asserted that the Soviet Air Force would not be the first to use chemical warfare agents. CIA (159)

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Thus, by the 1960s, "no first use" of chemical and nuclear weapons had been interpreted to mean no first use unless there was clear, direct evidence of enemy preparations to use such weapons. "Retaliation" apparently could be undertaken before the fact, in response to enemy preparations. 25X1

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Lack of recent information on Pact offensive use of chemicals makes it hard to determine what the current interpretation of the "no first use" concept may be. 25X1

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In the nuclear arena at least--where the USSR also has made a pledge of "no first use"--the Soviets clearly have become concerned in recent years that they might not have sufficient time to preempt. Hence a relatively recent emphasis on a "launch on tactical warning" option.

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Direct Evidence of First Use in "Conventional" War

Soviet official pronouncements on the "no first use" of chemical weapons aside, the whole question of Pact first use on the nonnuclear battlefield is affected by the general ambiguities of the evidence of the potential Pact use of chemicals. There are often ambiguities involving the scenario or context for Pact offensive use of chemicals, and there have been many problems in interpreting the data because of difficulties in terminology.

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* The overwhelming majority of Pact sensitive, classified military writings ^{25X1} seem to link Pact use of chemical weapons to the nuclear phase of combat operations. There have been some references over the years--primarily in the 1960s--to apparent Pact use of chemicals before the nuclear threshold had been crossed. Most of these have been at least ambiguous, however, about whether the Pact was the first to use chemicals. CIA Statute

For example, in the early-to-mid-sixties, some Pact classified writings discussed the combined use in certain tactical situations of chemical and conventional weapons without mentioning the use of nuclear weapons. These cases, however, seem to have envisioned an overall context of nuclear warfare which, at that time, the Pact normally assumed would commence at the inception of hostilities with NATO. Pact writers and plans lauded the advantage of delivering chemical and high explosive munitions together. Chemical projectiles often were discussed as being available for "conventional" artillery. That is, they could be delivered by a weapon which was intended as a "conventional means of destruction" in contrast to tactical and operational tactical missiles, which were primarily "nuclear means of destruction". However, this does not mean that delivery of chemicals by "conventional" artillery would necessarily occur

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in a conventional rather than a nuclear phase of combat .15 CIA Statute
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In most examples from classified writings on Pact use of
chemicals in nonnuclear warfare, there is no clear indication of
which side initiated use. 25X1

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15 It should be noted that Pact forces during the 1960s--and well into the
seventies--had not yet fielded "nuclear artillery" or nuclear projectiles for
their "conventional artillery," so chemical shells were their most potent
artillery-delivered ordnance. CIA Statute

16 Whereas the USSR ratified the 1925 Geneva Protocol shortly after it was
written, the US did not ratify the Protocol, and thus officially foreswear
first use of chemicals until 1975. As a result, from the Soviet perspective,
there would have been some reason for concern about US first use of chemicals,
throughout the sixties and into the seventies. CIA Statute

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Chemicals as Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Case Against. The vast majority of Pact writings clearly class chemicals as weapons of mass destruction. In the examples, derived primarily from classified Pact writings from the early sixties through the early seventies, of potential Pact offensive use of chemicals on the nonnuclear battlefield, there are, however, a very few suggestions that the Pact might consider chemical weapons, per se, to be "conventional weapons." In most of the small numbers of cases where the Pact might have used chemicals in nonnuclear warfare, they were to have been used in association with conventional weapons--but were clearly differentiated from them. CIA Statute

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Most of the other references directly linking chemical munitions to conventional weapons are related to artillery, date from the early-to-mid-sixties, and refer to use in a nuclear context. Interestingly, while most of these references also lumped nuclear and chemical missiles together as weapons of mass destruction, there are suggestions in some of the older references that chemical artillery ammunition--at least at that time--might not in all cases have been considered as a weapon of mass destruction. CIA Statute (165)

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CIA Statute (167)

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CIA Statute (168)

Various 25X1 sources in past years have also equated chemical weapons with "conventional" or "ordinary" weapons, but there usually is some ambiguity. For instance, in the early sixties--again, for the most part when war was assumed to be nuclear from its inception--Penkovskiy, in The Penkovskiy Papers, claimed that:

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"... chemical shells and missiles may be considered just ordinary weapons available to the military commander, to be routinely used by him when the situation calls for it." (169)

Penkovskiy base his assertion, however, on materials that treat chemical missiles in the context of nuclear war-fighting, in which chemical and nuclear weapons would be a routine aspect. This might also, in part, explain Penkovskiy's additional, 25X1 assertion that Soviet artillery units in the early 1960s all were regularly equipped with chemical shells--at the gun sites. CIA Statute (170)

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CIA Statute (171)

Use Before a Nuclear Strike. A number of other classified writings from the sixties advocated the use of chemical strikes immediately in advance of nuclear strikes to destroy main enemy groups during meeting engagements. It is not entirely clear though, from these examples, whether the initial nuclear strike--against enemy nuclear delivery means--had already occurred. In most examples, the evidence suggests that this was likely. These writings indicated that attacks with chemical weapons and ordinary weapons could be launched first, during the initial or subsequent phases of preparatory fire to bunch up the enemy's main and reserve groupings by hitting their lead columns and crossings. This would create favorable conditions for delivering nuclear attacks particularly in grouped strikes by nuclear missiles which would attain the greatest destruction of the enemy, while maximizing the effectiveness of the, then limited number of nuclear warheads available. 25X1

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Perhaps the most pointed of these examples is a writing from the late sixties which discusses naval combat operations employing only conventional means of destruction. It notes that a "modern" nuclear war might begin and be waged for a period of time with the opposing sides using conventional means of destruction alone. All other factors being equal, during nonnuclear combat actions the side that is better equipped with more sophisticated conventional weapons would have the advantage. Then, the writing gives an example based on the number of fire support ships and frontal aviation aircraft needed to support the opposed amphibious landing of a reinforced Pact motorized rifle division. Three options utilizing frontal aircraft are noted:

- Bombers with OKHAB-100 (i.e., chemical) bombs.
- Bombers with RBK-259 bombs containing cluster bomblets of the fragmentation and antitank variety--i.e., ordinary bombs.
- Fighter-bombers with rocket and cannon armaments. (175)

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Various Pact sources have clearly indicated that the "OKHAB" nomenclature refers to one of at least three different classes of chemical bombs, one of which has a combined fragmentation-chemical effect and is known to be filled with the nerve agent Savin. The nomenclature clearly indicates that these are not incendiary, illumination, photo or night flash, or night signal bombs--all of which are known to have different designators. CIA

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There are other, considerably more ambiguous, references to chemical bombs for nonnuclear operations in other writings. For instance, one late sixties document about a front offensive operation employing only conventional means of destruction but under constant threat of enemy use of nuclear weapons, noted that bomber and fighter-bomber aircraft would have a key role in such an operation. Their use of new combat means--particularly of the incendiary type, could have a considerable effect. The favorably writing evaluated the effectiveness of incendiary bombs in comparison with air-launched rockets and also chemical bombs. According to the writing, to neutralize one motorized infantry company on the march or in its area of concentration would require:

- Six MIG-17 aircraft with OKHAB-250 or OKHAB-235 bombs (i.e., Savin-filled chemical bombs).
- Fourteen SU-7B aircraft with S-5 or S-24 rockets.
- Only one or two MIG-17 aircraft with ZAB-360 incendiary canisters. CIA Statute (177)

The chemical bombs may have been included here merely to show the relative effectiveness of incendiary weapons, but the implication seems to be that all three types of weapons (chemical bombs, air-launched rockets, and incendiary bombs) could be available in a nonnuclear conflict. CIA Statute

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Yet another writing from the mid-1960s about civil defense discussed the possibility of a non-nuclear war. It noted that aircraft and missile technology developments ensured that strikes could be delivered against any area of the world and that modern means of destruction, essentially chemical and biological means, were enormously effective. It asserted that, even in the event of nuclear disarmament, a modern civil defense structure would be necessary. Thus, in our view, the writing, defending the continued importance of civil defense, is referring to NATO strategic use of chemical and biological agents even if nuclear weapons were abolished and not to Pact use of chemicals on the conventional battlefield. CIA Statute (181)

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References in Pact writings to use of chemical missiles in a nonnuclear environment 25X1 have been scarcer than those involving artillery and aircraft. Another example from the late 1960s appeared in a classified discussion of the missile technical support needed in a front offensive operation before the use of nuclear weapons. It noted such

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support was extremely complex because of the requirement for maintaining the rocket troops in constant readiness to deliver an initial massed nuclear and chemical strike in the event of a transition to nuclear operations, and for supplying the troops with conventional or chemically armed missiles for other missions. It seems to imply that at least some chemical missiles might be used for specific missions before the initiation of operations with weapons of mass destruction. CIA Statute (183)

Finally, there were a number of references in the sixties contrasting chemical and conventional weapons with nuclear weapons or merely linking chemical with conventional weapons. These writings largely appeared to refer to a nuclear context, however, or were too ambiguous to shed any light. A linkage of chemical and conventional weapons, in contrast to nuclear weapons, could result from emphasis on using the two types of weapons together to maximize their combined effects. Similarly, a contrasting of nuclear with chemical and conventional weapons also might have occurred in tacit acknowledgement of the significant differences in capability between missile/nuclear weapons and all other types of munitions. One definitive Pact writing from the late 1960s clearly stated that nuclear weapons were the basis of any method of conducting an operation and that chemical weapons and conventional means of destruction, which supplement nuclear strikes, are employed to rout major enemy groupings. Lastly, chemical and conventional weapons could well have been lumped together during the sixties in part because both were needed to make up for deficiencies in the availability of nuclear weapons. CIA Statute (184)



The Case For Chemicals as Weapons of Mass Destruction. In contrast to the relatively small sample of Pact writings which ambiguously discuss chemical use in a nonnuclear conflict, the vast bulk of Pact classified writings from the early sixties until the mid-seventies, when references to offensive chemical use largely ceased to appear, treat chemical weapons, along with nuclear ones, as weapons of mass destruction in a nuclear context. CIA Statute

These writings generally contrast the use of mass destruction with the use of conventional means of destruction during nonnuclear war. Most of the writings clearly indicate that by conventional means of destruction they refer to weapons with conventional explosive charges. One Pact writing from the late 1960s, in contrasting combat operations employing nuclear and chemical weapons with those using only conventional means of destruction, noted that in the latter case conventionally-armed

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missiles would be used. According to the writing, missile warheads could be filled with conventional explosive charges, napalm-type incendiary mixtures, or devices for radio and radar jamming. Cluster-type warheads filled with fragmentation or incendiary materials were noted as a promising development. At no point in the writing was there any indication that chemical warheads would be used. CIA Statute (185)

A similar theme appears in various other Pact writings, including some from the late seventies. These are definitive writings about the use of rocket troops and artillery at the start of combat in which only conventional means of destruction are used. They note that in nonnuclear combat, the Pact would strike the enemy by means of massed strikes with conventionally-armed (cluster-type) missiles or with artillery. There is no indication that chemical warheads or shells were to be included. CIA Statute (186)

A number of Pact writings dating from the late sixties explicitly exclude a massive, decisive surprise use of chemicals on the conventional battlefield. These writings stress the limitations in power and depth of effect of both sides' conventional means of destruction and compare these to nuclear and chemical weapons. These writings further assert that because combat actions in the nonnuclear period are based on the employment of conventional means of destruction alone, it is impossible to inflict a decisive defeat on an enemy simultaneously over the entire depth of his disposition or to drastically and quickly change the balance of forces in one's favor. 25X1

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In a similar vein, these writings assert that if a war should be unleashed without the use of nuclear--or "nuclear and chemical"--weapons, the principal means of destruction would be artillery and aviation, as well as fire and attacks by tanks. Aviation would make extensive use of incendiary weapons. Again there is no suggestion that any use of chemicals was envisioned. CIA Statute (188)

One of the most specific pieces of evidence refuting the concept that chemicals would be used on the conventional battlefield is a sensitive Pact writing from the late sixties which describes a methodology for evaluating the balance of air

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forces between NATO and the Pact. The writing noted that an evaluation of the strike-capability of the opposing air forces had to take into account the employment of nuclear warheads and chemical and conventional means of destruction. However, the writing asserted that nuclear warheads and chemical units of fire were not to be included in calculating or assessing the balance of forces in the nonnuclear period. CIA Statute (189)

Perhaps equally important is the treatment given to chemical, i.e., special, weapons by a most authoritative Pact document concerning frontal operations dating from the mid-seventies, which is supported by instructional materials provided to non-Soviet officers attending the Soviet General Staff Academy in 1975. In each of these cases--which as a whole provide some of the most recent definitive information on Pact chemicals--strikes with chemical weapons were discussed only in the context of nuclear war. CIA Statute (190)

In the Pact document mentioned above, "special" weapons, specifically including munitions filled with poisonous chemical agents, were directly linked with nuclear weapons and addressed only in those sections dealing with nuclear warfighting. At no time were "special" weapons addressed in the context of conventional operations although the use of missiles with conventional cluster warheads, combat helicopters, and incendiary devices was discussed. Also, in the sections dealing with nuclear war and the employment of nuclear and "special" weapons, the use of chemical munitions clearly was addressed in connection with the breakthrough of fortified areas and the neutralization of pillboxes. However, in the sections dealing with conventional operations, it was noted that the special feature of the breakthrough of fortified areas consisted chiefly in the difficulty of destroying pillboxes with conventional weapons. This document then details these means--large-caliber guns, flamethrowers, and special engineering equipment--but there was no indication that chemical "special" weapons were included. Finally, in discussing the transition to combat operations with the use of nuclear weapons, the document asserts that upon receipt of the front commander's instructions to prepare for immediate use of nuclear weapons, it was necessary--if not already done--to supply Pact units with nuclear missiles, ammunition, and bombs and to bring "special" ammunition to the artillery and mortar firing positions. This last assertion clearly implies that chemical munitions might not be available to firing units before preparation to commence nuclear operations. CIA Statute (191)

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never seen any
chemicals during the conventional phase of a war--nor 25X1 ever
heard of one. 25X1 these weapons are considered
weapons of mass destruction and Soviet doctrine calls for their
use only during a nuclear phase.¹⁷ In fact 25X1
that in peacetime the Poles have neither chemical nor nuclear
warheads--both of which they would need to receive from the
Soviets. This, of itself, would suggest it is unlikely that the
Pact plans to conduct a massive, decisive surprise attack with
chemicals, at least in the initial stages of a conventional war
in Central Europe. CIA Statute (193)

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¹⁷ A large percentage of the known exercises, primarily during the 1960s,
which featured Pact offensive use of chemicals involved the Polish (or
Coastal) Front. 25X1

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Transition to the Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Over the years, Pact doctrine as reflected in classified writings, has referred in differing ways to the various phases of a war with NATO. Initially, in the fifties and at least early sixties, Pact writers believed that war most likely would begin with massed nuclear strikes. Later, the likelihood of a conventional phase of operations began to be raised. References to conventional war versus nuclear war were frequent, in Pact documents, although these continued to acknowledge the possibility that war could begin with massed use of nuclear weapons. Beginning in the mid-sixties, and appearing with greater emphasis by the mid-to-late seventies, we see references to the limited, selective, or restricted use of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction. This change in Soviet doctrine was closely tied in to Khrushchev's fall which reversed the decline of conventional forces and to changes in US warfighting strategy. As recently as the mid-to-late seventies, however, it was noted that war could begin with massed nuclear strikes, with limited use of weapons of mass destruction, or without their use. CIA Statute (225)

Continued references not just to a "nuclear phase," but also to a "weapons of mass destruction phase" in general war and to limited use of "weapons of mass destruction," as well as the "limited use of nuclear weapons," suggest that once a decision had been made to employ these weapons the Soviets might decide for various tactical reasons to employ chemicals shortly before nuclear weapons. In this case, the situation would be one of the use of chemicals on a transitional battlefield, however, and not on a battlefield which the Soviets expected to remain conventional.¹⁸ CIA Statute

Although Pact writings do not specifically address a chemical transitional phase, a few writings provide some support for such a theory. For example, some Pact classified writings from the sixties noted the potential use of chemical strikes immediately in advance of nuclear strikes to destroy main enemy groupings during meeting engagements. Although in most of the examples the initial massed nuclear strike may already have occurred, in at least one example the nuclear threshold may not yet have been crossed. Nevertheless, the vast bulk of Pact

¹⁸ Soviet doctrine in general, even now, seems to be based on the assumption that war with NATO, however it may start, in all likelihood eventually would turn into general nuclear war. Thus, phases of "limited use of nuclear means" or "limited use of weapons of mass destruction," would themselves be transitory. CIA Statute

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writings. 25X1

25X1 have portrayed chemical strikes along with, or subsequent to, nuclear attacks. CIA Statute (226)

Lecture notes apparently taken by an non-Soviet Warsaw Pact official in the late sixties at a high-level Soviet course on strategy for military operations in Europe indicated that the phases of such an operation might include:

- A phase without nuclear weapons employment with limited other means of mass destruction.
- A phase of decisive nuclear activity.
- A phase of concluding activity.

There was no indication in the material as to what was meant by "other means of mass destruction" or by "limited." These phrases may have referred to the use of chemical before nuclear weapons, but later sections of the notes clearly linked chemical with nuclear weapons and mentioned only conventional weapons during nonnuclear operations. In addition, there is a possibility that there could have been some error in the lecture notes. In fact, an authoritative Pact classified writing from the same period discussed the buildup of efforts during a front offensive operation, noting that a front operation could include:

- Periods of nonnuclear and limited nuclear operations.
- The decisive nuclear period.
- The period of concluding operations.

The document went on to discuss the buildup of efforts in operations conducted with conventional weapons; operations when both sides switched from combat with conventional means of destruction--artillery tanks and aviation--to limited nuclear weapons use; and operations begun with the unlimited use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, specifically including massive nuclear and chemical strikes. The "periods" mentioned in this writing correspond exactly with the "phases" of the lecture notes--with the exception of the first one, suggesting that the lecture notes may have been in error and may have meant that the first phase was one of conventional or of limited weapons of mass destruction use. Whatever may have been meant by the lecture notes, they clearly do not suggest a massive, decisive use of chemicals on the nonnuclear battlefield. 25X1

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Use of Chemicals on the Conventional Battlefield. Recent references in Pact classified writings to the use of chemicals in nonnuclear war or in a transitional phase are ambiguous and--at least outwardly--appear to address NATO use of chemicals before the nuclear threshold is crossed. 25X1

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Some of the strongest evidence for possible use of chemicals prior to nuclear weapons is contained in an 25X1

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authoritative critique of a major 1977 Warsaw Pact CPX. The critique castigated the exercise staff for over reliance on nuclear weapons to destroy NATO's nuclear means, noting that it was very important to inflict immediately the maximum damage on the enemy's tactical nuclear means with conventional means rather than waiting to hit them with nuclear weapons. It noted that staff planning did not take account of available powerful, long-range means of destruction such as operational-tactical and tactical missiles, i.e., Scuds and FROGs, with conventional explosives, before moving to nuclear weapons. The critique concluded that the Pact should think about developing more effective cluster and "special" warheads for these missiles and fully exploit them under the conditions of conducting combat actions before nuclear weapons were used. CIA Statute (234)

In this writing, the ambiguity rests on what was meant by "special." The part of the writing which contained the reference to "special warheads" was a discussion of conventional explosives and cluster warheads, and was immediately preceded by a discussion of the growing capabilities of conventional weapons--including the development of recent innovations such as fuel-air explosive munitions and smart weapons. Thus, although clearly not meaning ICM because cluster munitions also were specifically mentioned, "special" in this context might have meant fuel-air explosive, incendiary, or perhaps terminally-guided warheads. On the other hand, it may have meant "chemical," and thus implied in a prescriptive fashion interest in using chemical before nuclear weapons. If this were the case, however, the writing might imply that existing chemical warheads were not considered adequately effective and, at the time of the writing, were not routinely incorporated into Pact staff planning for operations in a nonnuclear environment. CIA Statute

While there has been little or no CPX play of the use of chemical warheads 25X1 since the critiqued exercise in this writing--and certainly none involving a nonnuclear scenario--planning to use ICM missile cluster warheads in the conventional phase of Soviet CPXs has drastically increased since the mid-seventies. CIA Statute

Theoretically, the Pact use of chemicals on the "conventional" battlefield in a massive surprise attack could afford the Soviets a number of advantages, including:

- Suppression of NATO tactical and operational-tactical nuclear missiles, nuclear artillery, and nuclear delivery aircraft in combination with the Air Operations Plan.
- Penetration of NATO defenses.

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- Infliction of enormous NATO casualties because of the large-scale and continuing need for medical treatment of wounded personnel).
- Demoralization of NATO's forces and long-term degradation of NATO's operational capabilities. CIA Statute

These potential advantages would likely be tempered by a number of disadvantages or risks. First, extensive use of chemicals could unnecessarily clutter the conventional battlefield--one upon which the Pact may already hope to prevail without forcing a NATO escalation. Contaminated terrain and operations in protective gear would make a difficult war unnecessarily more difficult. CIA Statute

In addition, using a sizeable number of missile launchers and aircraft to conduct a massive chemical strike during the conventional phase of operations could conflict with longstanding Pact requirements to maintain a substantial portion of nuclear-capable systems at a high level of readiness for the initial nuclear strike. This is particularly true for the missile forces. Pact classified writings from the late sixties and early seventies note that, during the nonnuclear period of a war, the rocket troops must be constantly ready to deliver nuclear strikes, and that the widescale use of rockets with conventional--or, by inference, chemical--warheads would reveal the missile units' locations, prematurely expose them to enemy strikes, and thus reduce their readiness for an immediate nuclear or nuclear/chemical strike. 25X1

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Unconventional Uses of Chemicals. Pact writings suggest one possible "limited" use of chemicals--might be in diversionary/sabotage operations. 25X1

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Pact writings from the early sixties through at least the early seventies reflected concern that US Special Forces might employ portable nuclear land mines and incendiary

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devices for sabotage tasks, and use highly toxic chemical agents and biological means to contaminate water sources, food supplies, and small areas where Pact forces were or were to be deployed. According to the writings, at least some of these actions would be accomplished covertly preceding the onset of hostilities. CIA

CIA Statute (228)

25X1 There is some indication from classified writings 25X1 that special Warsaw Pact military units might conduct similar operations. Classified writings from the mid-sixties on ground force operations noted that both chemical and bacteriological weapons were to be used by rocket troops, aviation, and artillery, but that bacteriological weapons could be used covertly. A mid-seventies Pact writing, discussing the operational reconnaissance to be provided for a Front operation, notes that Pact special and reconnaissance groups would perform reconnaissance and conduct "special measures" in the enemy rear areas. Depending on the tasks and situation, they would be reinforced by crews of "special weapons" subunits. The special measures cited included the destruction or incapacitation of enemy weapons of mass destruction and other important targets, carried out with all types of weapons fire in raids and ambushes and by use of mines and explosives. These writings, coupled with the obvious, direct interest in what the US intended to do in such circumstances, suggests that Pact forces might well use these weapons in limited covert operations, perhaps even before war began. CIA Statute (229)

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CIA Statute (230)

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Release Authority for Chemical Weapons

The issue of release authority offers illumination on the question of the timing of Pact use of chemicals. Various classified Pact writings and high-level sources over the years have indicated that the initial Pact use of all types of weapons of mass destruction--whether nuclear, biological, or chemical--normally would require a political decision by the Soviet Politburo or Defense Council. The actual order to use weapons of mass destruction, or to deliver the initial massed strike, would emanate from the Soviet Supreme High Command (VSK) through its executive agent, the Soviet General Staff, and be issued to theater, front, fleet, and strategic commands, but could skip to lower echelons. Pact classified writings, however, indicate that in the case of a surprise enemy nuclear attack, the initial nuclear strike could be ordered independently by front (and perhaps even army) commanders²⁰. This suggests that the use of chemicals probably also could be authorized under circumstances of an enemy attack. CIA Statute (196)

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CIA Statute (197)

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CIA Statute (198)

The evidence as to whether the Soviets expect to release chemical weapons separately from nuclear ones is not clear.

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a political decision at the highest level would be required for the use of weapons of mass destruction. This decision would be made only once and normally would authorize the use of all three types of weapons: nuclear, biological and chemical.

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in Pact writings 25X1

since the sixties of, at least, nuclear weapons to avoid their unauthorized use. The only known pre-authorization of the use of weapons of mass destruction--specifically nuclear weapons--is conditional and clearly in the context of a surprise Western attack which disrupts positive control.

CIA Statute

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25X1 there are at least some Pact military writings from the mid-to-late 60s which seemed to call for the use of chemicals immediately before nuclear weapons to optimize their effect.

CIA

Soviet Union's Control of the Warsaw Pact Forces, for insight into Soviet command relations with Pact allies. (U)

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Release at Lower Levels. Over the years there have been suggestions that front, army, and even division commanders might have the authority to employ these weapons on their own authority. Close inspection of the evidence, however, suggests

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