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Dr Raymond McClean  
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13 November 1969

Dear Dr McClean

USE OF CS AGENTS

I am sorry that it has taken so long to reply to your letter to Mr Callaghan of 27 August about the use of CS agents, but I am now letting you know of the most up-to-date information we have on as many points as possible among those you refer to in your letter. This is as follows (the numbers are the paragraphs in your letter):

Paragraph 2

In the original Londonderry riots the RUC were not under the command of the Army, and although they had been given as much instruction as was practicable in the time available when CS was supplied to them, there had not been time to give them detailed instructions in its use. CS was supplied on the understanding that it would be used only in circumstances where rioting was taking place on a substantial scale, was causing injury to persons and extensive damage to property, and was prolonged. It was to be used on the minimum scale necessary and only when it would be the most effective and humane way of dealing with the situation. Subsequently, the RUC were brought under the command of the GOC Northern Ireland and were given much more detailed instruction, and in the incidents in which the RUC have used CS since the original events in Londonderry they have observed exactly the same restraints as the armed forces.

Paragraph 3

It is not clear what is meant by TLV; if this is a Maximum Allowable Concentration, the index is irrelevant so far as CS is concerned since it is used only in circumstances of limited duration. If, on the other hand, the threshold level for detection is meant, this has been determined at about  $4 \times 10^{-3} \text{ mg/m}^3$ , above which minor symptoms of pricking in the eyes and nose will be experienced (and resented).

Paragraph 4

In the light of the level of the minimum detectable concentration (above) no instrument is necessary to confirm the presence of CS.

Paragraph 8

The only unpleasant effect which might occur from a canister is by the direct application of residual contamination to the eyes, or possibly to the skin. Experiments and clinical observations indicate that in practical



Dr Raymond McClean

13 November 1969

circumstances conjunctivitis produced by such contamination resolves quickly when treated in the usual way by immediate irrigation. More specific types of treatment are not normally necessary. Commonsense requires that empty canisters should be left severely alone until collected and disposed of by burial. Sir Harold Himsworth dealt with this in his report at Paragraph 46 when he appealed for "souvenirs" to be handed in for safe disposal.

Paragraph 9

I can do no more here than to refer you to paragraphs 9 - 13 of the Himsworth Report, of which you undoubtedly have a copy.

You will realise that paragraphs 1, 5, 6 and 7 of your letter have not been answered, but as the Home Secretary has agreed that Sir Harold Himsworth should enlarge his team and extend his terms of reference to assess the evidence about CS in the widest possible way, it would be preferable to wait until his further report is issued. This is likely to be in the spring or early summer of 1970.

Yours sincerely

*P. Leyshon*

P Leyshon

*(Question 6 is covered to some extent in the Porter Report. I am amazed to find that so little work has been done or at least published. Especially so in view of the experimental work carried out by Prof Russell + Prof Kahn in France.)*