The influential weekly paper "Literaturnaya Gazeta" (L.G. has called for a legislative inquiry into the April 1979 deaths of at least 70 persons in Sverdlovsk due to an as yet undisclosed event at a secret military biological facility.

In "Military Secret" (L.G. 34/90, 22 Aug 90, p. 12), a correspondent in Sverdlovsk, who states he was an "in the know" of a private investigation into the affair, states medical personnel were checking in cemeteries and the public records office. Zenova came to the conclusion that the deaths and sudden illnesses were due to a virulent form of anthrax (Sibirskaia Yaza) that hit hardest in an area downwind from a closed military facility, and seemed to single out military age individuals. Some of the early deaths were misdiagnosed as "bacteriological pneumonia" under pressure from unnamed authorities, as a medical coverup ensued, blaming the "isolated deaths" on contaminated livestock. Zenova contends the coverup continues today, and that medical histories and other documentary evidence have vanished.

According to the author, it was common knowledge in Sverdlovsk that the so-called military garrison 19 in Chkalov district was a closed facility that employed bacteriologists. She believes L.G. enquiries sparked an unusual response: a visit by the regional newspaper "ural worker" to the facility. An article last spring, "garrison 19" gives the military version of April 1979, according to Zenova, the article--identifies part of garrison 19 (Y voyennyy gorodok) as the U.S.S.R. MOD military epidemiological scientific-research institute of microbiology. It claims the institute formerly worked on biological protective measures for the military and civil populations and that production of protective vaccines ceased in 1986. It claims the institute, under pressure of self-igblminhancing, is looking for cooperative ventures with civil enterprises.

Quotes Colonel A. (Kharchenko), chief of the military epidemiology section, as noting rumors of an explosion that damaged a biological agent and then categorically denying there was anything to do with explosives at the facility. Zenova notes the military did not deny venting or discarding the pathogens.

Cites a section specialist, B. (Mikhailov), as blaming...
OUTBREAKS OF ANTHRAX ON CONTAMINATED LIVESTOCK IN SVERDLOVSK REGION. ZENOVA FINDS THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE ON THIS UNCONVINCING AND NOTES DEATHS OF PEOPLE OCCURRED A WEEK OR MORE BEFORE SYMPTOMS APPEARED IN LIVESTOCK.

4. (U) ZENOVA CONCLUDES WITH A DEMAND FOR PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY TO CALL A TRAGEDY A TRAGEDY AND NAME THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. OTHERWISE, SHE SAYS, A PRIVATE INVESTIGATION CANNOT ENSURE IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
MSGNO: 7 (MIIR) ALL **30/08/90** **15:07**

DISSEM: (U) FIELD: NONE
WARNING: (U) REPORT CLASSIFIED CONFIDENTIAL
DECLADR
END OF MESSAGE - CONFIDENTIAL

NNDD

***A 01***

9001391191