

White Phosphorus Munitions

“The assaults on Fallujah by the United States military in April and November 2004 involved the use of white phosphorus. White phosphorus has extremely damaging effects on the health of victims, including severe burns and irritation of the respiratory system. [This analysis concludes that] the use of white phosphorus was illegal (per Chemical Weapons Convention, Protocol III to the Convention on Conventional Weapons and international humanitarian law) as it could be argued to be a chemical weapon, a riot control agent, or incendiary weapon. Furthermore, the methods and means of its use in Fallujah violated the wars of law.”

<http://law.bepress.com/expresso/eps/1959/>

Picture at right: *Back and shoulder of 15 year-old Ayman al-Najar at the Al-Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis. He sustained severe injuries from white phosphorus after Israeli bombing of the village Khoza'a. Date Photo taken January 18, 2009.*



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ayman2.jpg>

And, while Israel was being internationally “condemned” and denounced for the use of these weapons, where did they come from, but the U.S.!!

“... the US Army, in their very own publication, from the (WARNING: pdf file) March edition of Field Artillery Magazine in an article entitled "The Fight for Fallujah":

"WP [i.e., white phosphorus rounds] proved to be an effective and versatile munition. We used it for screening missions at two breeches and, later in the fight, as a potent psychological weapon against the insurgents in trench lines and spider holes when we could not get effects on them with HE. We fired 'shake and bake' missions at the insurgents, using WP to flush them out and HE to take them out."

“In other words the claim by the US Government that White Phosphorus was used only for illumination at Fallujah had been pre-emptively debunked by the Army. Indeed, the article goes on to make clear that soldiers would have liked to have saved more WP rounds to use for "lethal missions."

“... the [Army] Field Artillery Magazine article fails to inform its audience that. . . there is no way you can use white phosphorus like that without forming a deadly chemical cloud that kills everything within a tenth of a mile in all directions from where it hits. Obviously, the effect of such deadly clouds weren't just psychological in nature.”

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=1227>

“Military veterans familiar with white phosphorus, known to soldiers as "W. P." or "Willie Pete," said it could deliver terrible burns, since an exploding round scatters bits of the compound that burst into flames on exposure to air and can burn into flesh, penetrating to the bone.”

“... the Bush administration made an embarrassing public reversal last week. Pentagon spokesmen admitted that white phosphorus had been used directly against Iraqi insurgents. ‘It's perfectly legitimate to use this stuff against enemy combatants,’ Colonel Venable said.”

http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/21/international/21phosphorus.html?_r=1

“January 23, 2009

“On January 21, the United States deposited its instruments of ratification for Protocols III, IV, and V of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (“CCW”) and for an amendment to that Convention. Protocol III covers incendiary weapons, Protocol IV covers blinding laser weapons, and Protocol V deals with explosive remnants of war. The Amendment expands the scope of the Convention to non-international armed conflicts.

“The CCW and its Protocols are part of a legal regime that regulates the use of particular types of conventional weapons that may be deemed to pose special risks of having indiscriminate effects or

causing unnecessary suffering.”

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/01/115309.htm>

However, the U.S. exceptions to the CCW is just one of a variety of instances where these munitions have been inappropriately used by both the U.S. and Israel. The U.S. has signed-on to international agreements about white phosphorus, but done so by taking exception to key phrases of those agreements that *appear* to then provide a wide latitude in interpretation.