

[REDACTED]

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USSR: Biological Warfare (BW) Accident in
Sverdlovsk [REDACTED]

Recent intelligence strengthens allegations that an accident at a BW installation caused civilian casualties in southern Sverdlovsk during April 1979.

A recent emigre report is consistent with previous rumors and supporting data about an accident at a BW installation in Sverdlovsk.

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The magnitude of the epidemic and the causative organism remain conjecture. The announcement about an anthrax epidemic in a public health context appears to have been designed to prevent a possible panic among Sverdlovsk's million-plus population.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] pathogenic bacteria allegedly escaped into the air and spread over industrial and residential areas of southern Sverdlovsk. The military immediately imposed quarantine and decontamination procedures, but the situation was not brought under control until late May or early June. [REDACTED] Defense Minister D. Ustinov and Health Minister B. Petrovskiy came to Sverdlovsk, probably to supervise the antiepidemic effort.

[REDACTED]

Civilian doctors were not permitted to treat the patients. The casualties and the measures taken by the military and health agencies were officially blamed on an outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

16 Jan 80

1

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Approved for Release
Date 1 NOV 1987

7