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Cover photo: Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan monk, displays instruments - used by the Chinese authorities to torture him - which he smuggled out of Tibet. Among them are electro-shock weapons.

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Arming the Torturers

Electro-shock Torture and the Spread of Stun Technology

Introduction

Amnesty International has for many years opposed torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners and detainees in all cases without reservation, and is therefore extremely concerned at reports indicating that the spread of hand-held electro-shock weapons amongst law enforcement officers is contributing to the incidence of torture and such ill-treatment.

The portability and ease with which electro-shock weapons can be concealed, means that the incapacitating, painful and other effects of such weapons may be attractive to unscrupulous security, police and prison officers, especially since traces of their use on victims can afterwards be difficult to detect. Aware of the growing international marketing of electro-shock weapons, Amnesty International is publishing this report to warn the international community of this danger. As a first preventive step, the organization is calling on governments to immediately prohibit the transfer of such weapons to all countries where routine torture or instances of electric shock torture and ill-treatment are reported.

Despite their stated adherence to the basic principles of international human rights law, including ratifying international human rights treaties, governments continue to permit electric shock torture and ill-treatment in prisons, detention centres and police stations. These violations have been documented by Amnesty International in 50 countries since 1990, and in 18 of these countries there was evidence of the use of hand-held electro-shock weapons in such violations (see Appendix 1). The overall trend indicates that the number of countries where such torture is carried out using modern electro-shock stun weapons is growing, and there appears to be little or no effective international and national regulation by governments of the design, use and trade in such weapons. The number of supply companies has also grown substantially since the invention of modern stun technology in the late 1970s, and Amnesty International has identified over 100 such companies as having offered to supply modern stun weapons for sale since 1990, although legal prohibitions on the use and trade of such weapons in some European countries and in Canada mean that some companies have only offered to provide such weapons clandestinely or through brokering via third countries while some claim no longer to supply (see Appendix 2).

Electro-shock weapons have been deliberately, and often repeatedly, applied to sensitive parts of prisoners' bodies, including their armpits, necks, faces, chests, abdomens, the inside parts of their legs, the soles of their feet, inside their mouths and ears, on their genitals and inside their vagina, on their back and rectums. Such practices are often combined with other forms of torture and ill-treatment, including psychological torture, as described in this report. Depending on the application and the individual, immediate effects include severe pain, loss of muscle control, nauseous feelings, convulsions, fainting, and involuntary defecation and urination. Longer-term effects from electric shock torture can reportedly include muscle stiffness, impotence, damage to teeth, scarring of skin, hair loss, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder, severe depression, chronic anxiety, memory loss and sleep disturbance. In cases where there are physical signs of electric shock torture such as skin reddening and scarring, these usually fade within some weeks.

The spread of modern electro-shock weapons

A field telegraph used to administer electric shock torture on detainees in Turkey. First discovered in 1980.

Since the 1970s, Amnesty International has campaigned against the misuse of electric cattle prods (known as '*picana*' in Latin America) to torture and ill-treat prisoners¹, as well as other devices and methods designed to inflict electric shocks on prisoners². However, increasingly torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment has been carried out using different types of modern, high-pulse and high-voltage electro-shock "stun" batons and smaller devices called "stun guns" (which can resemble an electric razor). The batons can sometimes at first sight look like cattle prods, but the new high-pulse "stun technology" is designed to be used on humans. Unlike cattle prods, which can be used to immobilise or cause localised pain in the human body, modern stun weapons are designed to temporarily incapacitate a person and can inflict severe pain in a few seconds or even milli-seconds (see further below in Part 3).

Stun technology was initially developed in the United States of America (USA) during the 1970s. By 1982, Amnesty International was campaigning to prevent the transfer of electro-shock batons from the United Kingdom (UK) to South Korea following the suspension of an export licence for this purpose by the US government because of allegations of torture. South Korea began domestic production of stun weapons around this time. By 1985 Amnesty International was appealing to the government of Taiwan to prohibit the use by police of electro-shock batons which they had acquired on their own initiative from South Korea. Amnesty International pointed out that "*the only apparent purpose for which electro-shock batons might be used by police officers against people in their custody would be to torture or ill-treat*", but the government of Taiwan said such batons were for the self-defence of police officers. Taiwan subsequently became a leading producer and exporter of electro-shock weapons, and set up manufacturing facilities in mainland China where torture with such weapons is commonplace. A UK company manager has since described how his company supplied electro-shock batons to China one year after the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in 1989, stating that: "*The Chinese wanted to copy them.*"

¹ For example: In Uruguay, a young man detained in March 1993 in the 3rd District police station of Montevideo was tortured by the police with what he described as "*electric prods*" to make him confess to 14 counts of robbery. A judge confirmed the injuries and two electric cattle prods were seized from the police station. In Sudan, Brigadier Mohamed Ahmad al-Rayah al-Faki, was arrested during August 1991, and claimed that he was raped and sexually abused while undergoing torture which also included being shocked with what he called "*electric cattle prods*".

² Such as devices using mains electricity and crank generators. A Sri Lankan refugee told the UK Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture how during his detention in 1989 his interrogators suspended him upside down while naked, and, during questioning, beat him with sticks on his chest, back and abdomen until he lost consciousness. He recalled something, possibly a wire, being touched to his body, resulting in uncontrollable shaking. He was later told by another detainee that it was a "*small telephone-like device with a handle*", which when turned on produced an electric current - probably not a modern stun weapon, but apparently just as potentially damaging.

During the 1980s and 1990s production of stun weapons began in several other countries such as Brazil, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico and South Africa (see Appendix 2 for a full list). Other new products entered the international markets from the USA such as electro-shock riot shields, electro-shock

Five stun guns and a taser gun displayed a police equipment exhibition.

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stun belts (using a remote control - see further below), "tasers" (a device which fires darts connected to a 4 or 5 metre wire into a victim's body or clothes so that an electric shock using roughly 10 watts at 50,000 volts for two to three seconds is inflicted from a distance), and stun guns which also shoot tear gas.

Some companies manufacture their own stun weapons or manufacture under licence products designed elsewhere, while other companies involved in the trade have only been engaged in the marketing of stun weapons through specialist magazines and through international exhibitions on security equipment. Recently, for instance,

Taiwanese stun batons were exhibited for sale in Shanghai; Brazilian stun batons were exhibited for sale in Washington; Chinese and Russian stun batons were exhibited for sale in Paris; French stun guns were exhibited for sale in Berlin; and South African stun batons and riot shields were exhibited for sale in both Israel and in the Palestinian Authority. Those invited to such exhibitions include a large proportion of police and military officials. However, the marketing of stun weapons in the USA, France, Taiwan, Israel, South Africa and Japan is also increasingly aimed at private security companies and even private consumers. In the USA this is carried out through mail order magazines, gun shops, uniform stores and general merchandise shops, and some even believe school teachers should use stun guns for classroom control.

International trade data on the transfer of electro-shock weapons has not been disclosed by governments. As a result, increases in the spread of such weapons can only be deduced from (i) the increasing number of companies trading in stun weapons, (ii) claims by the manufacturing companies of increases in their production and sales, and (iii) the incidence of torture and ill-treatment with such weapons some of the accounts of which are published below in this report.

- PART 2 -

RECENT CASES OF THE USE OF ELECTRO-SHOCK WEAPONS FOR TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT

The following brief reports illustrate the range of situations in which torture and ill-treatment using modern electro-shock weapons can occur.

Algeria

Torture appears to have become widespread in the country. It is practised by police, the gendarmerie, and military security personnel mainly to extract confessions from detainees about their alleged participation - and that of others - in killings and other attacks against individuals and properties. Such “confessions” are regularly used, often as sole evidence, to convict the detainees and others named during interrogation. Electric shock torture is one of the methods of torture used against detainees, and commonly involves electric shocks to the ears, genitals and other sensitive parts of the body.

A detainee (name withheld) in Blida Military Prison testified: *“I was arrested on 28 February 1993 by military personnel and a few civilians, most of them hooded. I was taken to Bouzareah where I spent the night...Next day, I was called by a guard to a room away from the cell wing...”* In the room, there were three men, one of whom asked the detainee questions about many other people. His testimony continues:

*“...Then he began to kick me hard and even used an electric leather truncheon with three metal knobs as a stick, and pulled out my beard with his hands. Then he asked for the metal bedstead...he lay me on the bedstead and [the other man] raised my hands high and handcuffed them and put some clips on them and said ‘I’ll give you some earrings, son of a *****’. Then he set off the electrical apparatus several times, ignoring my shouts and kicks as my legs were free. [The other] beat me, especially my stomach, with his electric truncheon - when I said that I had a cardiac prosthesis he said he’d recharge it for me. I had bitten my tongue and the blood was flowing... Many times I nearly lost consciousness as the electric shocks got stronger...”*³

Bulgaria

Incidents of ill-treatment by members of the Bulgarian special police forces dealing with organized crime have occurred repeatedly over the last couple of years, and Amnesty International is extremely concerned by what seems to have become a pattern of police violence. On 23 November 1995, a group of around 20 police officers belonging to the Bulgarian special forces, the so-called Red Berets (*Cherveny barety*), carried out a raid on a cafe in the *Druzhiba* district of Sofia⁴. Eye-witnesses to the raid said that all police officers were masked, some wore uniforms, others were plain clothed and two or three wore flakjackets with the insignia “police” on them. They were armed with revolvers, automatic Kalashnikovs and electric batons.

³ See *Algeria - Deteriorating human rights under the state of emergency* (AI Index: MDE 28/04/93), March 1993

⁴ See *Bulgaria - Alleged ill-treatment by the Bulgarian special police forces in the Druzhiba(it) quarter and Rakovski (it) stadium in Sofia* (AI Index: EUR 15/02/96) February 1996

Four Red Berets stormed the cafe, and, without having asked to see people's identification papers, ordered everyone at gunpoint to leave, while the others blocked off the surrounding streets. They then started to kick the cafe patrons and beat them with their batons on their heads and bodies. Witnesses to the incident stated that the beatings went on for about 15 minutes. Six of the victims had to undergo emergency surgery.

China

The use of torture in China is widespread and far higher than suggested by official government statistics on the number of investigations. The use of electric batons is one of the most common forms of torture. It has become so widespread and endemic that it is difficult to document the number of victims.

· Many prisoners held in prison-factories or labour camps claim they are beaten when they cannot perform the required work or protest about long hours of work. At Hanyang prison, Hubei province, political prisoners have alleged that they were frequently beaten and abused, and that electric batons were often used. An appeal letter received by Amnesty International dated March 1993, and signed in the name of political prisoners held at Hanyang prison, described how one prisoner, Ye Youwen, was beaten: *"[Ye Youwen] was passing by the iron gate of the brigade camp and was ordered by a guard to stop. He was slow to react, being very short-sighted, but the guard considered that he was being deliberately offensive. After Ye opened the gate the guard beat him with an electric baton on the body repeatedly until Ye collapsed on the ground. The next day, we found that...[Ye] had suffered such damage to his nervous system that he could not eat or drink..."*⁵ The appeal letter went on to document several other cases of the use of electric batons as punishment for *"resisting reform-through-labour"*.

· Detained in Fuxin, Liaoning province in early 1995, four girls aged under 16 and two young men were repeatedly hit, kicked and given shocks with an electric baton by a Public Security section chief intent on making them "confess" to "hooligan and promiscuous behaviour".

· Tibetans held on suspicion of supporting Tibetan independence are also frequently tortured. Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan monk who had spent 33 years in prison and labour camps, smuggled torture instruments out of Tibet into India. He displayed several electric batons on a UK television program (see cover photo), explaining: *"This is the worst thing - an electric cattle prod. They use this on your body. If they press that button, your whole body will be in shock. If they do it for too long, you lose consciousness but you do not die. If they press this button, you can die. They used it all the time on my body. They tortured me because I was speaking out for independence and I will continue to speak out"*.

· In the same TV program, two brothers, Pasang, aged 19, and Tenzin, aged 11, described how they were tortured in prison. Pasang told viewers how *"They poked an electric baton in my face, my mouth"*, while 11-year-old Tenzin said, *"They put the electric baton inside my mouth...It burnt me badly and gave me a wound. It was terrible. They treated me very badly"*. Both brothers managed to escape to India.⁶

⁵ See *China: Five Years after Tiananmen* (AI Index: ASA 17/20/94), June 1994

⁶ *Escape from Tibet*, Yorkshire Television, broadcast on Independent Television Network First, Tuesday 28 March 1995

· According to unofficial sources, Damchoe Pemo, a Tibetan woman detained in Lhasa on 20 May 1993, miscarried a week after police forced her to remain standing for at least 12 hours and beat her with electric batons. A Lhasa trader in her mid-twenties, she was reportedly four or five months pregnant when she was detained, and was apprehended on suspicion of being a member of a pro-independence organization.⁷

· In a report made public in March 1995, Catholics from two villages in Lingshou county, Hebei province, claimed to have been subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and heavy fines by local officials for breaches of the government birth control policy. A letter of appeal stated: *“They raided houses and arrested everyone, whether young or old...they even took away as hostages sick people who could not get up from their bed”*. Those allegedly persecuted included a 40-year-old woman who was ill. She was reportedly *“brutally beaten with an electric baton..., chained and tortured at night”*. According to the appeal and other sources, detainees were beaten and tortured with the aim of accelerating the payment of fines. Some reportedly received electric shocks on their tongue with electric batons or live wires.⁸

· In a recent case, Chen Longde, a pro-democracy activist from Zhejiang province, attempted to commit suicide by jumping from a third story window in an attempt to avoid repeated beatings by a guard at the Luoshan labour camp. On 15 August 1996, he was reportedly kicked, punched and inflicted with electric shocks from a baton used by a prison officer. The beatings started again two days later. When Chen Longde jumped through a window to escape the beatings, he suffered serious injuries. Labour camp officials reportedly admitted later that he had jumped through the window on 17 August after being beaten with electro-shock batons.⁹

Egypt

Torture of political prisoners in Egypt is widespread and continues to take place in the State Security Investigations Department (SSI) headquarters in Lazoghly Square, Cairo, and in SSI branches elsewhere in the country, as well as in police stations and *fīraq al-Amn* (security brigades). The most commonly cited torture methods reported are electric shocks, beatings, suspension by the wrist or ankles, extinguishing of cigarettes on the body and various forms of psychological torture.

The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) reported in 1996 that Islamist detainees are routinely transferred from the high security prison at Tora to the SSI headquarters to be regularly tortured with electric shocks. The Secretary General of the EOHR stated that detainees have testified that electro-shock batons have been used against them in the SSI buildings. Amnesty International is aware of a South African company which attempted to export electro-shock batons to Egypt during 1996.

Lebanon

⁷ See *Persistent human rights violations in Tibet* (AI Index: ASA 17/18/95), May 1995

⁸ See Amnesty International Urgent Action, UA 62/95 (AI Index: ASA 17/15/95) 14 March 1995

⁹ See *People’s Republic of China, “Chen Longde is Tortured”* (AI Index: ASA 17/88/96) 19 September 1996

Reports of torture and ill-treatment of criminal and some political prisoners have been received from Lebanon. Methods described include severe beatings on all parts of the body, *falaqa* (beatings on the soles of the feet), suspension by the arms from a pulley, and electric shocks. A Lebanese prisoner who was held at the Ministry of Defence in April 1994 stressed that the Ministry was “*not a prison by any standard. It is more of a torture centre falling directly under the control of the Intelligence Services*” and described different types of torture he had suffered, including “The Flying Carpet”:

“They would put us flat facing the ground, the chair is put on our backs in order to tighten our limbs forcefully against the legs and back of the chair and bend us the opposite way by pulling the rope rigidly between our legs and arms the opposite direction. I do not need to mention the agony and endless torment we get exposed to. The kicking on the head and the electric shocks while in this position resulted in serious damage to our back. We are still suffering from back pain today...They use an electric rod which produces a very high voltage and use it on our eyes, arms, legs, groins and other parts of our bodies. They used to order one of the soldiers to take a photo of us after electrocution in order to show it to us ‘before we meet our maker.’”

Another Lebanese prisoner tortured in the same place during the same period said:

“I don’t know where to start from. The first thing I remember is being tied to a chair with my feet caught between the seat and the back and being hit on the soles of my feet with an electric wire until my feet were bleeding profusely...In a moment of weakness and pain I crumbled and accepted to say what they want me to say in order to avoid any further suffering...From there on I remember that between each and every word I was being subjected to electrical shocks....During all the period from 28 March 1994 until 16 April 1994 I was kept standing, deprived of food, water and sleep for a span of three to four days at a time. I was naked, blindfolded my hands were tied behind my back while I was facing the wall with my legs widely spread apart. They used to walk on my toes, electrocute me at will and at times when I could take no more I used to collapse on the floor...They used to come and wake me up with electric shocks...”

Russian Federation

Amnesty International continues to receive numerous reports of ill-treatment in police custody in the Russian Federation.

The organization has urged the Russian authorities to investigate reports which indicate that a group of law enforcement officials exceeded their authority and violated the law by attempting to extract confessions under duress from members of the Christian-Democratic Union of Russia (HDS) working at the Christian Girls Shelter, during illegal searches and interrogations in Moscow Police Station No. 24. In November 1995, three members of the HDS were detained and taken to the Moscow Police Station. During their interrogation by the police, they were asked to give false statements compromising the group’s chairman and were threatened, if they refused, with imprisonment, beatings with electrical clubs, or being sent to fight in Chechnya.¹⁰

Saudi Arabia

¹⁰ See *Amnesty International Concerns in Europe (AI Index: EUR 01/01/96)*, March 1996

A pattern of torture and ill-treatment, particularly of former members of the Iraqi armed forces, emerged in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War. Among the many forms of torture described by victims have been: systematic beatings all over the body, *ta'liq* (hanging by the wrists from the ceiling or a high window), *falaqa* (beating on the soles of the feet) and the administration of electric shocks, including by electro-shock weapons.

Saudi Arabian use of electric batons has not been restricted to Iraqi refugees. Earlier during the Gulf War, the Saudi Arabian secret police tortured prisoners who they suspected of spying for Iraq. One victim, Muhammad¹¹, described on UK television how he was tortured regularly every night:

*"The secret police handcuffed me and put legcuffs around my ankles. A bar was put between my legs. Then they started beating me up with the electronic sticks. For many hours they tortured me on the soles of my feet. Being hit with an electric baton not only made me vomit, but I lost control of everything. I lost control of my bowels, my water, I just could not control anything in my body. I was left in my own vomit and urine all night. That is how they want you to be during a torture".*¹²

On 23 May 1994, Gulum Mustafa, a Pakistani national, was said to have been severely tortured in a detention centre for drug offenders in Jeddah shortly before he was transferred to Priman Prison. The torture included insertion of a metal stick into his anus and electric shocks. He reportedly was left bleeding and unable to walk, and was not given any medical attention. He has since been released and deported to Pakistan.

South Africa

Amnesty International has received reports from South Africa for many years of detainees being tortured with electric shocks during interrogation. During the often violent run-up to the first non-racial elections in April 1994, there were frequent reports of arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment by members of the security forces. On 19 February 1994, Thebiso Lephoto and seven others, including two 14-year-olds, were arrested in Thokoza township by soldiers and taken to Steenpunt army base. There, they were stripped, beaten and tortured. Among other tortures inflicted on them, they alleged that they had been subjected to electric shock torture on different parts of their bodies, including their genitals, arms, legs, feet and fingers. Thebiso Lephoto said that two soldiers, who were wearing balaclavas, used a device that *"looked like a small black cattle prod, with two things sticking out of it. [They pressed a] trigger and then we felt the shocks, to our private parts. We had been stripped of our clothes and cold water thrown over our private parts. We were lying on the floor"*. He said that he was shocked three times in this manner, and that the shocks were "very great". Each time his body jumped, he fainted.

Since the elections, there have continued to be reports of torture primarily of suspects in criminal investigations but also of members of marginalized groups such as street children and refugees, by the police and the army. The allegations have implicated in particular members of the police murder and robbery squads and other special investigation units. Although the possession or sale of electro-shock

¹¹ *"The Torture Trail"*, Channel Four Dispatches, 11 January 1995. Muhammad's name was changed to protect his identity.

¹² *Channel Four's Dispatches: The Torture Trail*, 11 January 1995

weapons is not prohibited in South Africa, the new constitution prohibits torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

On 31 July 1996, 16 railway commuters died and 80 others sustained serious injuries during a stampede at Tembisa station in Johannesburg which was triggered by security guards using electro-shock weapons. These were described by a victim as "*black rods ...a stick type of thing, where you control the crowd, sort of, so you don't have visible marks*". Amnesty International and local non-governmental organizations called for an independent inquiry into the use of this weaponry and into the security guard industry. The South African Government agreed to an inter-departmental Committee of Inquiry, which reported on 16 August 1996 that the security guards' indiscriminate use of electro-shock batons on commuters in confined spaces caused severe pain, immobilization and panic, thus contributing to the stampede and to the deaths and injuries. The Report stated that "*the private security guards used the electric batons for crowd control purposes when in fact the batons are patently inappropriate for that purpose*", and that they had received no training in the use of such weapons from a poorly regulated security industry. "*In the absence of a legal and regulatory framework for the manufacture, sale and use of electric batons and the absence of conclusive and independent medical research on the effects of the use of the electric batons*", the Committee called, amongst other things, for such batons to be banned until reliable and independent medical research confirms that the use of such batons would not subject a person to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. If such confirmation is established, then new specific rules would have to be laid down for their use.

On 31 October 1996, security guards at the University of the Western Cape were accused of using a hand-held electro-shock stun baton on a crowd of students seeking to register for study. An eye-witness said that "*a suspicious-looking charcoal coloured device...[was]...pointed at a female student. The device made a sound like an electrical short circuit and the student fell back into the crowd screaming...when the door opened again, the same tactics were used.*" As a result of calls from the Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture in Cape Town for an urgent investigation, the University ordered an internal inquiry which found that the Campus Protection Services (CPS) had previously requisitioned 10 "*paralyser*" stun batons from a local company, and concluded that "*the use of stun batons by the CPS be suspended indefinitely until the government provides a regulatory framework permitting the use of such instruments in a manner consistent with the right not to be subject to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.*" The batons were subsequently withdrawn.

United States of America (USA)

In recent years, Amnesty International has expressed concern and published detailed reports about ill-treatment by US law enforcement officers, as well as unlawful killings. Since electro-shock stun weapons were introduced in the 1970s and became fairly widely used by police and prison officers in the USA - although being banned in certain states (see further in Part 3 below) - a number of cases of ill-treatment and deaths using such weapons have been reported, although no national government study of these cases has been carried out. Stun guns, batons and shields, rather than taser guns, have been more widely sold and used.

Dart-firing taser guns

Detailed reports of incidents of taser gun injuries and deaths are not often published, but the range of circumstances suggesting excessive use of force may be illustrated by the following:

· Officers of the Los Angeles Police Department, the first major customer of taser guns in 1980, fired taser darts into Rodney King, whose televised beating by police officers preceded the Los Angeles riots in 1992. The sergeant was seen attempting to keep the wires from tearing or tangling, apparently preoccupied with his weapon rather than controlling his officers, while the taser shock made King more vulnerable to the beating. The Los Angeles County Court subsequently recommended that the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department replace its taser guns with an alternative gun which fires plastic bullets, but this recommendation was rejected by the Los Angeles County Sheriff.

· In March 1993, Michael Bryant was shot by Los Angeles police with a taser gun after falling into a pool, and was then "hogtied" - placed face down in restraints with his hands and ankles tied together from behind. He subsequently died. A coroner found the cause of death to be acute cocaine intoxication and asphyxiation from restraint procedures.

· In July 1996, a 29-year-old woman, Kimberly Lashon Watkins, died after being shot by police with a taser gun in Pomona, California. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's department said that she had been driving under the influence of drugs and had crashed into a wall and a parked car, before resisting arrest. The Sheriff's Deputy is reported to have described the taser gun as "*a kind of debilitating thing where the shock is supposed to catch you off guard... Something from the charge did not agree with her system.*" After being shot with the taser gun, Kimberly was taken to hospital where her heart stopped. An autopsy was pending.

Electro-shock shields

Texas state correction authorities stopped the use of stun guns reportedly on medical grounds, but continued to allow prison guards to use electro-shock riot shields when removing prisoners from cells. On 1 December 1995, Texas correctional worker Harry Landis was reported to have collapsed and died after enduring two 45,000 volt shocks while training with a riot shield.¹³

Remote-controlled stun belts

Amnesty International expressed concern in June 1996 over the introduction of remote controlled electro-shock stun belts for use on US prisoners because they appeared designed to degrade and could be misused by officials to deliberately inflict pain, intimidate, humiliate and degrade prisoners.¹⁴ The belts inflict a powerful electric current through the wearer's body. The shock causes severe pain rising during the eight seconds that the current flows and instant incapacitation in the first few seconds. The belts have been proposed for use on prisoners working in chain gangs in Wisconsin, and are increasingly being used on prisoners during judicial hearings. Both of these uses are in contravention of international standards on the treatment of prisoners.

Literature distributed by one of the two US manufacturers clearly indicates how using the belt can result in cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment: "*After all, if you were wearing a contraption around your waist that by the mere push of a button in someone else's hand, could make you defecate or urinate yourself, what would you do from the psychological standpoint?*" Wearers are warned that the belt could be activated, from a distance of up to 300 metres, after "*any outburst or quick movement ... any tampering*

¹³ See Anne-Marie Cusac, "Stunning Technology", *The Progressive*, July 1996

¹⁴ "*United States of America: Use of electro-shock belts*", Amnesty International, 12 June 1996 (AI Index: AMR 51/45/96)

with the belt ... failure to comply with a verbal command for movement of your person ... [and] any loss of visual contact by the officer in charge" (see also Part 3, below). It is reported that the US Bureau of Prisons, as well as the US Marshals' service and more than 100 county agencies have obtained stun belts, as well as 16 state correctional agencies, for example Alaska, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Ohio and Washington.

The company's sales manual states the "*fifty percent of product sales entail two transmitters: one for the court officer and one for the judge*", suggesting that judges themselves may be contributing to infringements of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (SMRTP) which expressly prohibit the use of restraints on prisoners when appearing before a judicial authority. Examples of prisoners appearing in US courts wearing such belts which have been activated, include: Edward Valdéz, who in November 1993 was incapacitated in front of waiting jurors after he left the courtroom – "*he screamed and crashed into the wall and fell down, and was out for about a minute...*" – said the California prosecutor; Bruce Sons, who in December 1994 was accidentally incapacitated by the belt while talking to his attorney during a break in a pre-trial hearing in California; James Oswald, a defendant in Wisconsin, who in April 1995 was made to wear a stunbelt and shackles despite appearing in court in a wheelchair. Oswald claimed he was stunned twice and his attorney claimed that the belt was part of an attempt by police to torture his client.

Yugoslavia - Kosovo province

In 1994, over 2,500 people in Yugoslavia were tortured or ill-treated by police primarily because of their ethnic identity. The majority of the victims were ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province which during the 1990s has increasingly suffered chronic, institutionalized police violence.

On 16 September 1993 Bilall Sylja, a former officer in the Yugoslav National Army, was arrested and accused of having been involved in the organization of a clandestine ethnic Albanian army in Kosovo. He alleged that while in detention, he was frequently subjected to torture with an electric baton, which was used on his whole body, including his ears, throat and genitals. He was sometimes soaked with water before the electric shock torture. Bilall Sylja described two types of electric baton, one with a battery and another type that was plugged in to the electricity supply.

On 27 October 1994 Bilall Idrizi, a member of the Independent Trade Union of Police Employees of Kosovo, was stopped by three state security officers in a street in Priština and forced into a car. He was taken to an unidentified building and interrogated about his motives for joining a trade union and the union's activities. When his answers failed to satisfy his interrogators, they ordered him to strip naked and then proceeded to punch him and beat him with a rubber truncheon. They also reportedly tortured him with an electric truncheon all over his body, including his genitals.

An ethnic Albanian former police officer, who wishes to remain anonymous, was sentenced in 1995 to two years' imprisonment after having spent eight months in pre-trial detention. According to his testimony, he was tortured, often with an electric truncheon, during the 52 days he was held in detention. This torture reportedly took place daily, during the evening and night hours. The former detainee explained how two sorts of electric truncheons were used on him. One type had the shape of electric tongs and was about 40 cm in length. He said that on contact with the body, it released an electric current which caused terrible pain and generated so much light that it was able to light up a dark room. The other kind of weapon was described as resembling an ordinary truncheon, about 50 cm in length, and having at one end

two batteries. It was said to produce a similar effect to the other truncheon. According to the former police officer, the pain from being tortured with an electric truncheon continued for a long time. He alleged that after three months he still felt himself incapable of most physiological functions and experienced much pain.

Viet Nam

Duong The Tung at Hanoi's People's Court on 16 April 1996.

© Dylan Martinez / Reuters

Amnesty International received reports that Duong The Tung, aged 19, was tortured by police with electro-shock batons in an anteroom at the Ha Noi People's Court on 16 April 1996 while awaiting the verdict of his trial in which he confessed to the murder of a police officer and pleaded for clemency. Although in good health when he was removed from the courtroom, Duong The Tung was heard screaming and returned a while later barely able to stand up. He was said to be suffering the effects of the electro-shock torture. Duong The Tung was then sentenced to death in order to avoid the "*indignation of the people and to preserve discipline and threaten other criminals.*" The fate of Duong The Tung remains unknown because the government of Viet Nam rarely provides information

on executions.

Zaire

Torture and ill-treatment of prisoners, particularly political detainees, remains widespread in Zaire. Roberto¹⁵, a 50-year-old university professor living as a refugee in Zaire, was tortured after being arrested for trying to organize a peace forum in 1991. He was taken by the Zairian security forces to a detention cell at military headquarters, where he was beaten with sticks. After a short period, an officer came into the cell and ordered his men to stop the beating. He said, "*It will leave scars and we will get complaints from Amnesty International.*" Instead, the officer ordered his men to use an electro-shock baton so as to inflict severe pain without leaving such obvious skin marks.¹⁶ For four weeks, Roberto was subjected to torture with electric shocks being applied to his genitals, the base of his spine and other sensitive areas. On most occasions, he vomited, lost control of his bowels and bodily functions and fell unconscious. He recounted his story on UK television¹⁷ as follows:

¹⁵ "*Back on the Torture Trail*", Channel Four Dispatches, 13 March 1996. Roberto's name has been changed to protect his identity

¹⁶ See "No pain, no gain", *New Statesman & Society*, 20 January 1995

¹⁷ Broadcast 13 March 1996

“This time they worked on me again with the electronic baton on the nape of the neck and in the genitals and it hurt so much that even now when I speak it is difficult to keep my head still as the back of my neck hurts very much...this type of weapon...I could really call it something really horrible - immoral - because those people who make it for torture they don't test it on their own bodies and they don't know the pain it causes. They do it to make other people suffer quite simply to make money. It's very sad”.

In another case, Amnesty International learned that Odong Mbaku Mwiki, a leader of a Zairian civil service trade union, DINAFET, was beaten severely by soldiers on 23 December 1994 during a peaceful protest march in Kinshasa concerning wages. The beating was prompted by his questioning of soldiers who were ordering a woman protestor to strip. When Mr Mwiki awoke in a local clinic where he had been taken for treatment, he was told that he had been hit on the back of the neck with an electro-shock baton by a member of the *brigade mobile* of the gendarmerie. Odong Mbaku Mwiki remained in the clinic until May 1995, but had lost the use of one arm and walked with difficulty, so could not continue working. A medical rehabilitation centre in Paris had agreed to treat him, but by the end of 1996 the French embassy in Zaire was reported to have refused him a visa to travel to France to undergo treatment.

- PART 3 -

TACKLING THE PROBLEM

The difficulty of detection

It would be wrong to assume that the cases mentioned above are wholly representative of the extent of the problem. Detecting the use of electro-shock weapons in torture and severe ill-treatment can be very difficult, not least because victims are often blindfolded, hooded or otherwise unable to see what is being used to inflict pain on them. Electro-shock weapons can easily be hidden from view. Often on their release, detainees are warned by police or prison officers against reporting the incident. The following case illustrates the difficulty:

In January 1996, it was reported that 12 Cypriot police officers, including some senior officers, faced dismissal following a report by an independent board of inquiry which described “*an organized system*” of subjecting detainees to torture “*aimed at securing confessions*”. The report followed a visit by the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT), during which a delegation heard numerous allegations of serious ill-treatment and torture by the police. The delegation met with “*a certain number of people...who had been in police custody in Limassol Town Police Station between February and November 1992. Nearly all those concerned described in detail the same forms of ill-treatment, including: suspension by the legs with the head just a few centimetres above the ground; blows struck with truncheons or wooden clubs; the application of electric shocks to various parts of the body (including the penis)...*”.

In one case, Stelios Neofitou was beaten on his body and this was carried out with a metal bucket placed over his head which was also hit. He was then handcuffed, stripped and wet with water before

being hung upside down and given electric shocks to various parts of his body including his genitals. He saw a police officer holding a baton, about two feet long, apparently made of aluminium. The ECPT delegation stated that, "according to those making the allegations, the treatment described above was inflicted late in the evening, during interrogations which lasted through the night. The officers who were said to have inflicted such treatment had their faces covered. The detainees were said, at a certain stage, to have had their heads covered by a kind of cloth bag and to have been surrounded by people who shouted threats and insults".

Despite the above evidence of misuse of electro-shock batons, Cypriot police were seen during 1996 carrying such batons in a riot control situation.

Electro-shock baton, made in
China, displayed at an exhibition
in Paris
© David
Hoffman

Professionals caring for victims of torture have said that torturers appear to like to use electro-shock weapons partly because torturers think this may not leave permanent marks on the victims' body. Nevertheless, detecting the use of electro-shock weapons in torture is still possible through medical analysis. A medical study was undertaken in 1976 by volunteer doctors of Amnesty International in Denmark of three Uruguayan torture survivors who had been kidnapped and tortured with a shock baton or cattle prod in Argentina that year. The victims had been handcuffed and blindfolded and repeatedly subjected to physical blows, cigarette burns and then electrical shocks in a recurring sequence. On examination four weeks later, the survivors were found to have, amongst other physical injuries and mental after-effects, multiple round, reddish scars approximately 1 mm in diameter mainly on the chest, lower spine and thighs which were the result of electrical burns from a "picana". These marks were quite distinct from the 5-7 mm whitish brown scars from cigarette burns, and two thirds of the scars were still evident 12 weeks after the torture.¹⁸

Other reports have suggested that modern high pulse stun weapons are less likely to leave obvious skin burn marks for such a length of time, but some victim's physical scars may be permanent or long-lasting. In 1995, the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture in London interviewed Rajan¹⁹, a Sri Lankan victim of torture. He described his treatment while in detention in Sri Lanka during August 1990, explaining how he was forced to stand with his back against the wall whilst a baton of approximately 5cm diameter and one and a half feet in length which made a clicking noise was placed against his right breast, three or four times at intervals. The baton produced an electric shock that caused him to fall to the floor shaking and left him dazed for approximately 10 minutes. At the time of interview, Rajan had a faint scar on his breast which he attributed to a burn from the baton. A doctor at the Medical Foundation stated that the scar was compatible with an electric burn.

No physical marks will be apparent if an electro-shock stun gun or baton is used to threaten and intimidate detainees. In October 1996, for example, the Austrian government agreed

Dr Aage Riis Kjaersgaard and Dr Inge Kempe Genefke, "Evidence of Torture" in *Victims of Torture in Uruguay and Argentina: Case Studies*, AI Danish Medical Group, 1977

¹⁹ Rajan's name has been changed to protect his identity

to the publication of a report by a delegation from the ECPT which contained serious allegations that detainees of Austrian as well as foreign nationality were at risk of grave ill-treatment particularly while detained at the Bureau of Security in Vienna. The Report included the following findings:

"From various sources the delegation received allegations according to which people detained by the Bureau of Security in Vienna during February and March 1994 had received electric shocks inflicted with batons equipped to administer an electric discharge. The delegation of the CPT did not meet any detainees who claimed to have personally received electric shocks. However, several detainees met separately by different members of the delegation alleged having been threatened with electric shocks during interrogation at the Bureau of Security in Vienna. These detainees all described a similar instrument which was a portable device the size of an electric razor one extremity of which had two electrodes, a device which reportedly a police official carried in a personal bag."

Even if physical marks are not found following allegations of electro-shock torture, trained physicians may still identify sequelae of electro-shock torture, for example through psychological evidence.

Actual use and intended use

Virtually all companies which market electro-shock weapons claim in their advertisements that such devices are medically safe and non-lethal if used properly. However, the prohibition on such weapons by a number of governments results from a recognition that they may too easily lead to unnecessary suffering, serious injury and even death given the range of circumstances in which they are used. The United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials state that "*the development and deployment of non-lethal incapacitating weapons should be carefully evaluated in order to minimise the risk of endangering uninvolved persons, and the use of such weapons should be carefully controlled.*" (Principle 3). Furthermore, the UN Basic Principles require governments to take steps to ensure that arbitrary or abusive use of force is not used by law enforcement officers, and that force is used "*only if other means remain ineffective*" (Principle 4).

Stun guns and batons

Example of a stun gun
Hoffman

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Research conducted and published by the UK Home Office Forensic Science Service in 1990 on a range of earlier lower voltage stun guns made in South Korea, Taiwan and the USA showed that they can cause high levels of pain and incapacitation using a succession of high peak, short duration impulses (as opposed to the low voltage regular alternating current of a cattle prod or low voltage baton which produce localised pain)²⁰. Victims will experience pain differently. The authors state: "*In a report outlining an attack with a stun gun, which was subsequently examined in our laboratory, a young woman described extreme pain in the area of her leg where the stun gun was applied. Her leg was jolted by the shock and kept on shaking uncontrollably; she was unable to move for some period of time. Once incapacitation had worn off, her leg remained stiff.*" The current was found to move along low resistance routes within the human body, for example blood channels and nerve pathways. The impact of stun guns is not affected by layers of clothing over the skin. "*For each pulse received there is likely to be a rapid shock extending throughout the body including the brain and central nervous system.*"

The UK Home Office scientists' report concluded that receiving a discharge for 1 to 2 seconds with a stun gun will probably cause the victim to collapse, and a 3 to 5 second discharge will probably leave the victim "*immobilized, incapacitated, left dazed and weak for at least five, perhaps 15 minutes...immediate localised effects are rapidly followed by an incapacitating effect on the whole body.*" This might produce twitch or tetanic contractions of the local skeletal muscles resulting in jolting and shaking sensations. These effects will vary depending on the contact area and on physiological characteristics of the individual. The victim may receive secondary injuries from the fall. Moreover, the research showed that stun guns have the potential to cause death through loss of coordination of heart muscle contraction (ventricular fibrillation) "*if [a current of] only a few microamps are conducted through the heart for a prolonged period.*" Also, the effects of a stun weapon may become indiscriminate in the sense that other people in contact with the target victim of a stun gun are likely to receive a considerable secondary shock.

Such lethal risks, pain and indiscriminate effects are often denied by advocates of modern stun guns, but usually without offering independent medical evidence. Some companies offer training as a means to ensure safety, but such training is not available to all those able to acquire electro-shock weapons. The human rights content of training courses appears to be weak or non-existent. One US course manual claims that "*should an officer misuse or abuse someone with less-than-lethal electronic weaponry, the consequence or error could, at the very worst, be a minor non-permanent injury.*" The evidence in this report shows how misleading such statements are. US law enforcement officers who have received training in the use of stun guns, report using them variously on assailants for 1 to 2 seconds on the legs, but also on the torso for 3 to 5 seconds. One report in 1992 states that: "*Less aggressive officers may experience negative results [the stun gun not inflicting incapacitation]...due to the fact that you must physically make*

M N Robinson, C G Brooks and G D Renshaw, "Electric Shock Devices and their Effects on the Human Body", *Medical Science and Law*, 1990, Vol. 30, No 4, pages 285-300

contact and hold that contact for up to six or eight seconds." One design feature in a modern stun gun is an automatic switch-off after 15 seconds of use, which is reactivated after 5 seconds. It would appear, therefore, that prolonged or repeated application of a stun belt, gun or baton constituting severe ill-treatment or torture is not prevented by their technological design and remains an ever-present danger.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the design of stun weapons led by US producers shifted towards the use of increasingly high voltages. In the early 1980s, advertisements by suppliers described batons with less than 10,000 volts but by the mid 1990s advertisements were describing the weapons as using between 50,000 and 250,000 volts on a low amperage. Such data on voltages was often the only technical information provided, and even the power in watts was not indicated. These measurements are not an accurate description of the capacity to inflict neuromuscular incapacitation since this also varies with the amount of energy emitted in each of the very short pulses that a stun weapon delivers, and with the number of pulses delivered in each second - assuming that other variables such as the battery capacity and condition, the leakage of current from the weapon, production tolerances, and resistance from different types of clothing as well as skin, muscle, fat and bone are all considered be broadly similar, which in real situations they are not.²¹

²¹ See for example "*Stun Guns: an independent report*" published in 1994 by TPrina Technology, Aurora, CO, USA. Note that this report does not discuss the safety of the human targets of stun guns, but only the safety of the users.

Electro-shock riot/capture shield displayed in the United Kingdom

©David Hoffman

Electro-shock shields

Following the death of Harry Landis, a Texas prison officer, in December 1995, the manufacturer of the electro-shock shield claimed there was no connection between the two shocks which Landis received in training and his sudden death after the second shock, but this was refuted by the Coryell County justice of the peace who said that the autopsy showed Landis died as a result of cardiac dysrhythmia due to a coronary blockage following the shocks. An engineer who subsequently conducted tests on the shield said: "*The manufacturer puts in its literature that the shield will not hurt anyone, including people with heart conditions. But they have not done studies on people at all. They conducted their tests on animals - anaesthetized animals. Do you see the danger here?*"²²

Taser guns

These guns shoot two wire-trailing darts with hooks over a distance of between 15 and 30 feet using a smokeless gunpowder. When the hooks affix to the victims body or clothing, the incapacitating shock is inflicted on impact or by using the gun's trigger. Although a US company which makes the "taser" gun cites a US Consumer Protection Safety Commission report which describes the taser gun as "*non-lethal to normal, healthy adults*", a forensic pathologist has argued that:

*"certain medical conditions, including drug use and heart disease, may increase the risk that the taser will be lethal...the 16 taser-related deaths in Los Angeles indicate a failure of the taser as a non-lethal weapon since its use did not prevent fatal results. If we eliminate those [taser-related] deaths in which gunshot wounds, blunt force trauma, or physical restraint were deemed important factors, then we have nine individuals who were alive and active, collapsed on tasing, and did not survive. In my opinion, the taser contributed to at least these nine deaths...It seems only logical that a device capable of depolarizing skeletal muscle can also depolarise heart muscle and cause fibrillation under certain circumstances."*²³

The fish-hook-like darts of taser guns are not easily removed from the human body unless the skin is lacerated or ripped open, and police are advised to take victims to hospital. One study found that, between July 1980 and December 1985, a Los Angeles emergency clinic admitted 218 patients after being shot by police with taser guns, and that 76% were "tasered" for what the authors describe as "*bizarre and uncontrollable behaviour (unusual but not necessarily directed violence), 40% for bizarre and extremely combative behaviour (with directed violence), and 5% for bizarre and uncontrollable behaviour with nudism*".²⁴ The study claimed that three victims died of cardiac arrest due to phencyclidine ("angel dust")

²² See Anne-Marie Cusac, 1996, *op cit*

²³ Terence B Allen, MD, Discussion of Effects of the Taser in Fatalities involving Police Confrontation", in *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, USA, 1991, pages 956-958

²⁴ Gary J Ordog, Jonathan Wasserberger, Theodore Schlater and Subramaniam Balasubramaniam, "Electronic Gun (Taser) Injuries" in *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, January 1987

toxicity. Other taser deaths have also been analysed, pointing to possible inherent safety hazards. A manufacturer also warned that taser darts are “dangerous to eyes”, and recommended shooting them “in the back”, a practice which some police professionals have warned could lead to onlookers concluding erroneously that the police were engaged in the gratuitous use of force.²⁵

Stun belts

The stun belt is said to be much more powerful than a stun gun. One of the US manufacturers claims in its literature that the stun belts are medically safe but a company spokesperson has admitted that no strictly independent medical tests have been carried out on the belt. Instead the company cites a doctor in Nebraska who has stated that he tested the company’s stun gun devices on anaesthetized pigs and that these are therefore safe to use on people “*under circumstances of proper usage*”. The reference to usage is not spelled out and it appears to refer only to single applications.

Reports indicate that humans who have voluntarily subjected themselves to the shock of a stun belt are able to prepare themselves psychologically and allowed to fall onto gym mats or lawn. This is very different from a situation where a prisoner has to wear the belt for many hours under constant fear that it may be activated, who may fall onto sharp surfaces, and who may have been doing strenuous exercise and sweating in the sun, thus increasing the conductivity of the skin. A company spokesperson is reported to acknowledge that “*at trials, people notice that the defendant will be watching whoever has the monitor [i.e. the remote control]*”.²⁶

The US Bureau of Prisons (BOP) says that its Health Programs Branch has “*reviewed the [stun] belt and concluded the technology is medically safe for use on the great majority of the BOP’s inmate population*”.²⁷ No details have been disclosed of the testing or how these may be construed to be independent tests. The BOP and the company manual warn that its stun belts (known as REACT belts) should not be used on pregnant women, persons with heart diseases, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy or who are epileptic. The BOP says it does not carry out medical examinations of all prisoners before deciding who should wear a stun belt, but only carries out examinations after a prisoner has been incapacitated:

*“Medical staff review an inmate’s medical file and other available documentation at the institution to verify whether any of the above five medical conditions exist that would preclude use of the REACT belt on that inmate. In the event activation of the REACT belt is necessary on an inmate approved for its use, medical staff examine the inmate as soon as possible following activation.”*²⁸

The manufacturer’s recent literature states that, after a warning noise, the belt inflicts eight-second shocks using 50,000 volts through the prisoner’s left kidney which causes instant incapacitation leaving welts. “*The active stun capability corresponds to the length of time the activator switch is depressed*”.

²⁵ Law and Order, “Reviewing Taser Usage”, July 1992

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Letter of reply from Peter Carlson, Assistant Director, US Department of Prisons, to Physicians for Human Rights, Boston, Massachusetts, 4 April 1996 in response to a letter of concern from Physicians for Human Rights.

²⁸ Ibid

according to the company manual. The company has marketed them "for total psychological supremacy...of potentially troublesome prisoners". Warnings are also given by the company that stun belts should not be used to "unlawfully threaten, coerce, harass, taunt, belittle or abuse any person."

It is reported that every prisoner required to wear the stun belt is "asked" to sign a form entitled "Inmate Notification of Custody Control Belt Use" by the BOP. This form is virtually the same as that promoted by the company for all law enforcement agencies. Both forms advise prisoners that activation of the stun belt causes "*immobilization causing you to fall to the ground; possibility of self-defecation; possibility of self-urination*" and state that activation could occur "*under the following actions on your behalf including any outburst or quick movement, any tampering with the belt, failure to comply with a verbal command for movement of your person and any loss of visual contact by the officer in charge*". In 1996, one company spokesperson said that stun belts had been accidentally activated by law enforcement officers nine times since they were introduced in 1991, the same number of times they were deliberately activated.

The stun belt has been promoted in the USA as an alternative to using shackles or leg-irons when transporting potentially violent prisoners, and to ease personnel costs when such prisoners appear in court. However, the "*high security transport belt*" is designed to be used with "*wrist cuffs in place, additional use of handcuffs and extended chain to leg shackles*" according to the company's manual. Section 33 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners includes the requirement that "*Instruments of restraint, such as handcuffs, chains, irons and strait-jackets, shall never be applied as a punishment. Furthermore, chains and irons shall not be used as restraints.*"

Tear gas stun weapons

More recently, a few companies in China, Taiwan and the USA have announced they wish to sell stun batons which can also dispense tear gas or pepper gas. The latter "*causes uncontrollable sneezing, violent tearing and burning pain on the skin for about 5 minutes*" according to the Taiwanese manufacturer, but little is known of the chemical composition of the sprays. Many countries prohibit the use of pepper gas due to fears of its health hazards, and it is argued that other types of tear gas (CS and CN in particular) can cause serious contamination problems for users and bystanders, as well as serious eye damage.²⁹ However, it is known that the sparks from electro-shock weapons can ignite inflammable substances such as alcohol propellant used in tear gas and pepper sprays.

In August 1990, New York Police Department officers reportedly sprayed an emotionally disturbed boy with a crowd control chemical. The boy, said to be armed with a hammer and two knives, had locked himself in his bathroom. When he did not respond to a verbal command, the police allegedly shot him with a taser gun, and the electric spark from the taser somehow started a fire. The boy was said to have suffered first and second degree burns.³⁰

²⁹ *Deadly Force: What We Know - a Practitioner's Desk Reference on Police-Involved Shootings*, William A Geller and Michael S Scott, Police Executive Research Forum, Washington DC, 1992, pages 376-382. However, this summary of evidence may be superseded by more recent reports, for example a US government report in 1994 which warned that pepper spray was not only potentially lethal, but also capable of causing future cancers and birth defects, and required more safety studies before being considered for public use.

³⁰ Cincinnati Police Division *Chemical Aerosol Report*, 1992, and *Law Enforcement News*, 31 October 1990

The use in law enforcement of other new types of electro-shock stun weapon pose additional threats to human rights. Doubts remain about the advisability for law enforcement of other new products such as a particular type of stun gun whose front electrodes comprise sharp spikes to penetrate a victim's skin, coiled razor wire with an electro-shock capacity designed to surround demonstrators, and lethal electric fences used in new US prisons.

However, debates over the intrinsic design of such electro-shock weapons should not obscure the need for governments to look closely at the most likely actual use. Real law enforcement situations in different countries with differing law enforcement records rather than experiments in controlled laboratory conditions should ultimately be the deciding factor in whether governments prohibit the spread of electro-shock weapons.

The legal position

Torture is absolutely prohibited under international law. Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "*No one shall be subject to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*" This is reiterated in Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR) and elaborated in other instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The term cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment "*should be interpreted so as to extend the widest possible protection against abuses, whether physical or mental.*"³¹

Every state has an obligation to prevent and eradicate torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment throughout the world, and must take effective measures to this end within their jurisdiction. Although the use by law enforcement officials of electro-shock weapons which inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering constitutes torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in many circumstances, there has been little attempt by governments to strictly regulate the use and transfer of electro-shock weapons or to stop the spread of such weapons and other security equipment to those countries whose law enforcers practise torture and severe ill-treatment. Member states of the United Nations reaffirmed in the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action at the 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights that: "*one of the most atrocious violations against human dignity is the act of torture, the result of which destroys the dignity and impairs the capability of victims to continue their lives and their activities* [paragraph IIB(5)55, and the Conference]...*urges all States to put an end to the practice of torture and eradicate this evil for ever through the full implementation of the...relevant conventions and, where necessary, strengthening existing mechanisms...[and] ...efforts to eradicate torture should, first and foremost, be concentrated on prevention.*"

National laws controlling the use and transfer of such weapons appear to vary widely. In Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and the UK, electro-shock weapons other than cattle prods are reportedly treated as prohibited weapons, although the ban is not always fully comprehensive. The prohibitions in Canada and the UK were introduced to prevent criminal use of stun weapons. UK companies have since admitted trying to circumvent the UK law by trading in electro-shock

³¹ Principle 6, United Nations Body of Principles for the Protection of Any Person under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, adopted by the UN General Assembly.

weapons which they do not bring into UK territorial jurisdiction and some company spokespersons have admitted arranging sales of electro-shock weapons to China, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia and Zaire. The UK government revealed in August 1995 that, despite the ban inside the UK, it had issued a "*transshipment licence*" for electro-shock batons during 1993 but stated that "*no further details can be released about this matter*" (concerning the origin, destiny and nature of the consignment). In 1995-6, three Belgian companies, a Dutch company, and a Spanish company advertised the sale of stun weapons or "paralysers" without prosecution. Two Luxembourg companies, while refusing to supply such equipment themselves, were willing in 1996 to provide inquirers with contacts in Belgium and Germany to facilitate supplies for foreign buyers.

On the other hand, there are few or no restrictions on the use or sale of such weapons in China, Israel, Russia, South Africa, the USA and Taiwan. In the USA, the use of stun guns was reported in 1995 to be legal in most states, but declared illegal in Illinois, Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, Michigan, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Washington DC, as well as in some cities whose ordinances can override state rulings. In Maryland, for example, where it was apparently legal to own and operate stun guns, the Baltimore city authorities banned them. Some US police forces such as Kansas City police force recommended against the use of stun guns on both safety and effectiveness grounds, and so have prisons departments such as in Texas. Unlike stun guns, Tasers are subject to regulation by the Gun Control Act of 1968 because they use gunpowder as a propellant to fire the darts. In the case of stun belts, one manufacturer in Cleveland stated that "*as long as it is not used for officer gratification or punishment, liability is non-existent.*"

Regarding international transfers, governments of the main supply countries do not publish export data on electro-shock weapons. The US Department of Commerce, which issues licences to US traders for the export of electro-shock weapons, has refused to disclose the exact numbers of such weapons exported from the USA or the countries of destination even though the Export Administration Act allows the release of such information if "*it is determined by the Secretary [of Commerce] to be in the national interest.*"

An illustration of the lack of government transparency of the trade in stun weapons is given by US Export Administration Regulations where such weapons were not mentioned in 1983 but by 1995 were included in a broader commodity licencing category (OA84C) as follows: "*Shotguns, barrel length 18 inches or over; buckshot shotgun shells; and arms, discharge type (for example stunguns, shock batons, electric cattle prods, immobilization guns and projectiles, etc) except equipment used exclusively to treat and tranquilize animals, and except arms designed solely for signal, flare or saluting use; and parts, n.e.s., including optical sighting devices for firearms.*" The US Commerce Secretary has so far refused to disclose specific details of export and re-export of electro-shock weapons, but revealed in 1995 that, in terms of the broad licencing category quoted above, his Department issued 2,083 licences to 106 countries valued at US\$117.3 million during 1991 and 1993. Whether actual deliveries of stun weapons took place in each case is not known, but the approved receiving countries included Algeria, Bulgaria, China, Lebanon, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Uruguay - all countries where torture using electro-shock weapons has been reported - as well as 14 other countries (see Appendix 1) where electric shock torture has been used by law enforcement officers. A US Commerce Department official revealed in August 1995 that an export licence had been issued for taser guns to Saudi Arabia despite the record of that country. US companies are keen to seek foreign sales - one stun belt manufacturer, while insisting that only "authorized" and trained law enforcement officers should use a stun belt on prisoners, and offering up to six hours training to customers in the USA, said it was nevertheless willing to sell the belts to China or Saudi Arabia.

Another US export commodity category (OA82C) has since 1983 included "*specialty designed implements for torture*" with "*saps, thumbcuffs, thumbscrews, leg irons, shackles, handcuffs,...straight jackets, police helmets and shields, parts and accessories*". Commerce Department export licence records for 1994 under this category show, for instance, that "*police helmets, handcuffs, shields used for torture*" were approved for Saudi Arabia, Russia and many other countries. "*Shields used for torture*" may conceivably include electro-shock riot shields. In November 1995, the US Commerce Secretary notified Congress that, due to letters and inquiries from the public, he was separating "*specialty designed implements of torture*" to a new export commodity control category with "*a presumption of denial for a licence to export*." However, no commitment was made to disclose data on exports of electro-shock weapon exports, and, moreover, under this particular category, the US government did not require US suppliers to obtain valid export licences for sales to Greece and Turkey because they are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, even though there was evidence of electric shock torture and ill-treatment being carried out at the time using such weapons.

The seriousness of this omission can be shown by citing the case of Mediha Curabaz, a nurse aged 25, who was detained in the street in Adana, Turkey, on 15 August 1991 by the police and taken to the Political Branch of Adana Police Headquarters.³² She was severely tortured during interrogation. She recounted:

"...they were making baseless accusations about people I work with and about people from the Adana Nurses' Association on whose committee I serve. They asked me to support their allegations, and said that if I agreed to do so, they would 'whisper in the prosecutor's ear' so that I would be released. When I refused, they beat me furiously all over, took me to the room used for hanging people up by the arms or legs and gave me electric shocks through my fingers, sexual organs and nipples, saying degrading things about my body. They said 'you will certainly do what we say if we give you the electric truncheon'. They thrust the electric truncheon violently into my sexual organs and I felt a pain as if I was being drilled there with an electric drill. They immediately lay me down on some ice. I started to bleed at this stage and fainted...before I had come fully round, they forced me to sign various papers."

Failure by governments to control the surreptitious transfer and use by police of electro-shock weapons is illustrated by the following case. In March 1993, a delegation of the ECPT visited Greece and interviewed a large number of people who alleged that they had been ill-treated while in police custody. The delegation heard several recent allegations of *falaka* and the administration of electric shocks; treatment which was said to have been inflicted at the Athens and Thessaloniki Police Headquarters. Delegates further found that the most recent allegations of electric shock torture referred to the use of a hand-held device. They met several detainees who alleged that they had recently received electric shocks via such a device and found that their descriptions of the device were concordant. Furthermore, upon examination by medical members of the delegation, some of the detainees were found to bear marks consistent with their allegations. A hand-held device for delivering electric shocks was subsequently discovered in the personal locker of a police officer attached to the Thessaloniki Police Headquarters. According to a reply from the Greek Government, the police officer involved stated that he had received the baton after

See *Turkey: Alleged rape and torture in Adana Police Headquarters*, (AI Index: EUR 44/06/92)
13 January 1992

meeting with a German police officer. The Greek Government is reported to have since outlawed the use of such weapons by law enforcement agencies.

In other European countries, the regulatory situation is more mixed. The growing market for stun guns amongst private citizens in the USA and Taiwan is replicated in France and Germany. In the latter two countries, stun guns appear not to be regularly used by law enforcement agencies but can be used by certain officers in special circumstances and can be exported. The President of a French company manufacturing stun guns and batons, claimed sales to many North African and Middle East countries. When asked about sales to Belgium, Italy and Spain, he told an international security magazine that: "*We sell to some importers in those countries, but they don't really know whether they're allowed to sell it or not...Because of the uncertainty, they keep a low profile and don't advertise.*"³³ Concern at French government involvement in the export of electro-shock weapons was heightened in 1996 when the head of the anti-riot police in Nicaragua announced that his unit of 400 officers received "a donation" of stun shields and batons from the French government.

Recommendations to governments

In order to prevent the use of any security or police equipment, including electro-shock equipment, in the torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners or detainees, Amnesty International is calling on all relevant governments and intergovernmental organizations to review legal and other practical measures in order to³⁴:

- immediately prohibit the transfer of all electro-shock stun weapons to any country where such weapons are likely to contribute to unlawful killings, or to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, for example by refusing any export licence where it is proposed that electro-shock weapons be transferred to a country where persistent torture or instances of electric shock torture and ill-treatment have been reported.
- publicly disclose in advance any transfer of security or police equipment, especially electro-shock weapons, from one country to another so that the human rights situation in the intended receiving country can be taken into consideration before any such transfers are allowed to proceed;
- establish a rigorous, independent and impartial public inquiry into the use of stun belts, guns and shields, and all other types and variants of electro-shock weapons, to assess their medical and other effects in terms of international human rights standards regulating the treatment of prisoners and use of force; the inquiry should examine all known cases of deaths or injury resulting from the use of such instruments, and the results of the inquiry should be published without delay;
- immediately suspend the use of stun belts and other electro-shock weapons for law enforcement unless and until independent medical and other evidence can clearly demonstrate that the likely practical

³³ *Asian Sources Security Products*, November 1995, Volume 1 Issue 3

³⁴ See also Amnesty International's 12-Point Program for the Prevention of Torture, Appendix 3

use of any such weapons will not contribute to unlawful killings, or to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

- conduct a thorough investigation into whether previous exports of electro-shock stun weapons from supplier countries have been used for electro-shock torture and ill-treatment;
- monitor and regulate all exhibitions promoting the sale of security equipment and technology in order to ensure that any proposed transfer of electro-shock stun weapons will not contribute to unlawful killings, or to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Recommendations to companies

Governments are ultimately responsible for compliance with internationally-recognised human rights standards, and to this end have a particular responsibility to regulate companies operating within their jurisdiction. However, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also requires that all corporate bodies and private citizens accept responsibility for helping to promote and protect fundamental human rights. Amnesty International will continue to approach companies which are known to manufacture or trade in electric shock equipment and will appeal to them:

- to support the above recommendations to relevant governments and to inter-governmental organizations;
- not to transfer electro-shock weapons to those countries with a persistent record of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

APPENDIX 1: COUNTRIES WHERE ELECTRIC SHOCK TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT HAS BEEN REPORTED SINCE 1990

* = law enforcement officers used hand held electro-shock weapons

+ = law enforcement agency reported to possess electro-shock weapons [Note: this is not indicated where company spokespersons have claimed to export to particular countries, unless this is verified independently]

Afghanistan	Sudan *
Algeria*	Togo
Argentina	Turkey*
Austria*	United States of America*
Bangladesh	Uruguay*
Bolivia	Venezuela
Brazil	Viet Nam*
Bulgaria*	Yemen
Chad	Yugoslavia - Kosovo province*
Chile	Zaire*
China*	
Cyprus+	
Colombia	
Congo	
Ecuador	
Egypt*	
El Salvador	Other countries from where there were reports of persistent or continuing torture or severe ill-treatment during 1995 (taken from Amnesty International Report 1996), include the following:
Ethiopia	
Greece*	
Guatemala	
Haiti	
India	Bahrain
Indonesia/East Timor+	Burundi
Iran	Cameroon
Iraq	Equatorial Guinea
Lebanon*	Israel
Mexico+	Kenya
Morocco/Western Sahara	Liberia
Nepal	Mali
Netherlands Antilles	Myanmar
Nigeria	Pakistan
Paraguay	Rwanda
Peru	Sierra Leone
Philippines	Tunisia
Russian Federation*	
Saudi Arabia*	
Senegal	NOTE: Instances of torture or ill-treatment in many other countries were also reported in the 1996 AI Report.
Somalia	
South Africa*	
Sri Lanka*	

APPENDIX 2: NUMBER OF COMPANIES REPORTED TO HAVE MANUFACTURED, SOLD, MARKETED, ADVERTISED, OR SOUGHT TO PROCURE ELECTRO-SHOCK WEAPONS SINCE 1990

Country	Number of Companies	Notes on the use and sale of electro-shock weapons
BELGIUM	3 (acted as brokers - to supply via foreign companies)	Private possession and sale of electro-shock weapons is illegal. The 1991 arms control law forbids the export of any arms without a licence but electro-shock weapons do not appear to be specifically included in the prohibited weapons list.
BRAZIL	1	
CANADA	- (were several)	In July 1992, it was reported that the Canadian Minister of Justice had banned the possession and sale of electronic "stun devices" to the general public. Police and military authorities were reported to be exempt from this ban. The situation regarding international sales is unknown.
CHINA	8	Electro-shock batons are widely used in China by law enforcers. Foreign sales are reported to be legal.
FRANCE	7	Electro-shock weapons do not appear to be explicitly banned by French law and are openly sold. An inter-ministerial committee responsible for defining weaponry has reportedly not considered electro-shock weapons.
GERMANY	13	It is legal to sell electro-shock weapons in Germany to persons over 18 years of age. Several private security agencies are reportedly equipped with them. Electro-shock weapons are not included in German arms control legislation.
HUNGARY	- (ceased advertising)	
INDONESIA	1	
ISRAEL	5	Stun guns and batons are not considered as weapons in Israeli law and require no licence. Exports appear to be legal.
JAPAN	1	Electro-shock weapons are reportedly not included in the arms export control legislation.
LUXEMBOURG	- (ceased trading)	It is reported that the possession and sale of electro-shock weapons is prohibited.
MEXICO	1	
NETHERLANDS	1 (denied trading)	One company repeatedly advertised to supply "paralysers", but has since claimed this meant 'cattle prods'. Cattle trade experts and veterinary surgeons state that "paralyser" is not a term that is used for

		cattle prods. The sale and possession of electro-shock weapons is prohibited in the Netherlands.
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	1	
SOUTH AFRICA	3	There is no prohibition in South Africa on the possession and sale of electro-shock weapons. In 1996, a government Committee of Inquiry into deaths and injuries at Tembisi railway station concluded that electro-shock batons should not be used in crowd control and that, until rigorous medical studies can prove their safety, the use of electro-shock weapons should be banned.
SOUTH KOREA	3	
SPAIN	1 (agent for foreign supplier)	The publicity, sale and purchase, possession and use of stun weapons is prohibited in Spain under the 1993 Royal Decree on the Regulation of Arms except by specially authorized officers.
TAIWAN	6	Members of the public, including private security personnel, are allowed to own and possess electro-shock weapons provided they have a permit issued by the police. Police and prison officers are reportedly issued electro-shock weapons "according to their duties". They are not standard issue. Under Taiwanese law, anyone wishing to export electro-shock weapons is required to file an application for a permit at the local police station. The police forward the application to the Department of the Interior, which is responsible for issuing export permits. The exporter is required to retain at their place of business marked sample(s) of the weapon(s).
UNITED KINGDOM	6 (acted as brokers or agents for foreign companies)	In the UK it is an offence under the 1968 Firearms Act (as amended in 1988) to possess, purchase, manufacture, handle or distribute an electro-shock device unless authority has been granted by the Secretary of State at the Home Office. It is not known whether police and security forces have received such permission, but in 1995 a local police demonstrated the use of electro-shock shields for "use against dangerous dogs". In 1995, the UK government stated that it had not issued export licences for electro-shock weapons under the Export of Goods (Control) Order, but admitted that it issued a licence to tranship such weapons in 1993.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	42	It is legal in many states to purchase, own, or sell electro-shock weapons for law enforcement and private use. Some states have banned the private ownership and use of electro-shock weapons. The export of such weapons from the USA is controlled by the Department of Commerce which has admitted issuing licences for this purpose, but has not disclosed details of such exports.

APPENDIX 3: Amnesty International's 12-point program for the prevention of torture

1. Official condemnation of torture. The highest authorities of every country should demonstrate their total opposition to torture. They should make clear to all law-enforcement personnel that torture will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

2. Limits on incommunicado detention. Torture often takes place while the victims are held incommunicado - unable to contact people outside who could help them or find out what is happening to them. Governments should adopt safeguards to ensure that incommunicado detention does not become an opportunity for torture. It is vital that all prisoners be brought before a judicial authority promptly after being taken into custody and that relatives, lawyers and doctors have prompt and regular access to them.

3. No secret detention. In some countries torture takes place in secret centres, often after the victims are made to "disappear". Governments should ensure that prisoners are held in publicly recognized places, and that accurate information about their whereabouts is made available to relatives and lawyers.

4. Safeguards during interrogation and custody. Governments should keep procedures for detention and interrogation under regular review. All prisoners should be promptly told of their rights, including the right to lodge complaints about their treatment. There should be regular independent visits of inspection to places of detention. An important safeguard against torture would be the separation of authorities responsible for detention from those in charge of interrogation.

5. Independent investigation of reports of torture. Governments should ensure that all complaints and reports of torture are impartially and effectively investigated. The methods and findings of such investigations should be made public. Complaints and witnesses should be protected from intimidation.

6. No use of statements extracted under torture. Governments should ensure that confessions or other evidence obtained through torture may never be invoked in legal proceedings.

7. Prohibition of torture in law. Governments should ensure that acts of torture are punishable offences under the criminal law. In accordance with international law, the prohibition of torture must not be suspended under any circumstance, including states of war or other public emergency.

8. Prosecution of alleged torturers. Those responsible for torture should be brought to justice. This principle should apply wherever they happen to be, wherever the crime was committed and whatever the nationality of the perpetrators or victims. There should be no "safe haven" for torturers.

9. Training procedures. It should be made clear during the training of all officials involved in this custody, interrogation or treatment of prisoners that torture is a criminal act. They should be instructed that they are obliged to refuse to obey any order to torture.

10. Compensation and rehabilitation. Victims of torture and their dependants should be entitled to obtain financial compensation. Victims should be provided with appropriate medical care and rehabilitation.

11. International response. Governments should use all available channels to intercede with governments accused of torture. Intergovernmental mechanisms should be established and used to investigate reports of torture urgently and to take effective action against it. Governments should ensure that military, security or police transfers or training do not facilitate the practice of torture.

12. Ratification of international instruments. All governments should ratify international instruments containing safeguards and remedies against torture, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional Protocol which provides for individual complaints.

APPENDIX 4

A SELECTED LIST OF COMPANIES REPORTED TO HAVE MANUFACTURED, SOLD, MARKETED, ADVERTISED, OR SOUGHT TO PROCURE ELECTRO-SHOCK WEAPONS SINCE 1990

Note:

Amnesty International is currently aware of over 100 companies which have manufactured, sold, marketed, advertised or sought to procure electro-shock weapons since 1990.

None of the companies, company spokespersons or individuals referred to in the enclosed list are known or considered to be directly complicit or involved with torturers or anyone engaged in cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Information on these companies is provided to illustrate the nature of the trade and is not comprehensive. The data was gathered from available sources in late 1996 and early 1997 - it is considered credible for the dates indicated for each entry. The information was taken largely from advertisements and reports issued by the companies in many countries during the 1990s unless otherwise specified. Beware that inevitable business and market changes mean that such information is never static. Some companies may have changed their addresses, may no longer offer to supply or procure electro-shock weapons, and may have ceased trading since the date of the information specified in each case. Amnesty International will be grateful to receive any further significant new information which may change data included in the entries in this list.

Belgian Business International	Rue Vergoote 18, 1200 Woluwe ST Lambert, Brussels, Belgium Tel: 32 2 735 6462	In June 1996, De Morgen newspaper reported that BBI director Alain Planard was willing to supply electric shock weapons. He reportedly said: " <i>Oh, you mean a shock baton. No problem at all. In Belgium you can't really do anything with them; here it's considered to be a weapon. But there are many export opportunities. There we can do some business.</i> " A BBI salesman is reported to have said: " <i>We work via other countries like Spain or no...the easiest is Paris. But if you have your own transitaire [middle man], we just deliver to there...We have several models. The most used one is no bigger than two packs of cigarettes and gives shocks of 150,000 volts. The problem with this type of weapon is that you have to stretch your arm to come into contact with the enemy. That's why I advise the mattracks [truncheons] with two electrodes at the end - ideal for riot police or presidential guards. Even last year, the Central</i>
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		<p><i>African Presidential Guards were equipped with this. Yes, Belgium is rather strict, but Africa and Latin America permit us to just export it to a middle man, and then we have it depart from there. That's the easiest way. You will fax us how many you want? Then I will make a nice price."</i></p> <p>BBI was officially registered as a publicity agency, with Greece as its main export destination, according to De Morgen.</p>
Inbraarmor	<p>Av. Papa Joao XX111, 5555 - Bairro Sertaozinho Maua - Sao Paulo, CEP 09370-900, Brazil Tel: 011 755 6855 Fax: 011 755 6596</p>	<p>In May 1996, Inbraarmor were displaying "<i>electric sticks specially developed for riot control</i>" at a law enforcement exhibition in Washington DC. The "<i>sticks</i>" were said to be made in Sao Paulo, Brazil by Inbraarmor, a Division of Inbrafiltro, USA.</p>
Jing An (China) Equipment Import & Export Corp	<p>25 Xi Tang Zi Lane, Nth Wang Fu Jing St Beijing 100006, China Tel: 551560 Tlx: 210020 CJIMC CN Fax: 861 5121365</p>	<p>In 1992 this company was controlled by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations. The company advertised the manufacture as well as the import & export of electric shock weapons, including a tear-gas launching electro-shock baton, a range of 50,000 to 100,000 volt batons, and a range of stun guns.</p> <p>Factory: Zhejiang Province, Yuyao City, TV Components factory, 22 Guangming Rd, Lishan, Yuyao City, Zhejiang Province. Tel 05844-661332 / 661354</p>
State Run No 764 Factory - Public Security, Business Division	<p>882 Danganan Tianjin, China Tel: 86 022 8309372 Fax: 86 022 8230294 / 8301268</p>	<p>In July 1996, this company claimed that it "<i>produced the first electric shock baton in China</i>" and to have exported to "<i>South East Asia, Africa, Europe and so on</i>". It now produces and supplies a range of "<i>shock weapons</i>", "<i>shock batons</i>", "<i>three function electric shock baton</i>", "<i>shock shield</i>" and "<i>stun guns</i>". The company's brochure warned users "<i>...Do not shock the head or in the heart in performing their missions. In order to avoid injuries and deaths, do not act over 3 seconds on the recipients.</i>" In 1993, the company advertised the sale of "<i>high and low voltage shock batons</i>" in a Securitex Thailand 1993 catalogue.</p> <p>In June 1996 this company engaged in talks to supply stun guns to an Indonesian company.</p>
Auto F	<p>Route des Dronieres B P 12 74350 Cruseilles France Tel: 04 50 44 11 38 Fax: 04 50 44 00 09</p>	<p>The President of the company is reported in the November 1995 issue of "<i>Security Products</i>" magazine to have said that for five years his company has been manufacturing a range of "<i>Bodyguard</i>" stun guns using between 150,000 and 300,000 volts. Capacity is reported to be 5,000 to 10,000 units per month with a turnover of about US\$2.5 million during 1993-94. He claimed his company exports stun guns to governments and security companies in North Africa and the Middle East but that they "<i>are not distributed to be used in the wrong hands. For obvious reasons, we cannot guarantee it 100%.</i>" The President said he could sell a minimum order of 200 units. "<i>One of our products can work for 10 hours without burning.</i>" Batteries have to be changed every 3 to 35 minutes depending on the model. The President claimed that his company's products have been certified as safe by the French Ministry of Health.</p>

Doursoux - Securitec s.a.r.l.	80 Avenue de Conde 94100 St Maur des Fosses France Tel: 33 1 48 89 32 08 Fax: 33 1 48 89 15 79	In 1995 this company issued a catalogue advertising equipment for law enforcement agencies, security teams and others involved in security work which included "US-made" "Thunder Power" stun guns using 150,000 volts, "Electro Choc"(sic) "immobilizers" using 120,000 volts and a range of "Z-Force" stun guns imported from the USA using from 80,000 to 200,000 volts. The company can also supply two types of electro-shock baton. A spokesperson said in 1996 that sales of stun guns "was booming". The company was associated with Enforcer Pulz & Charbit GmbH of Germany .
Bonowi - Vertriebsgesellschaft von Sicherheitsprodukte	Bahnhofstrasse 2a, 27419 Sittensen, Germany Tel: 04282 3861 Fax: 04282 28 02	In October 1994, the company advertised that it could supply "electroshockers" and the "Paralyser Special" using 120,000 volts. Also, it stated it could supply "Elektroschockgerate - Electric Shock Weapons, and the "Paralyser Diplomat". The company also advertised a range of paralyser stun weapons including the 60 centimetres long "Paralyser Military" truncheon and a range of "Omnicomput XL5000" shock devices.
Electron - Import & Export Co, Dipl. Ing. H. Wallfass,	Viersener Str. 230 PO Box 101524 D-41015 Mochengladbach, Germany Tel: 02161 88555 Tlx: 852 582 Fax: 02161 88558	In 1995, the company advertised that it could supply various types of security equipment using name "Electron", including "Shok-Baton (Gummi-Schlagstock mit Elektrisier-Effekt)" in a range of sizes. These included the "Schock-Tronic" using 50,000 volts, "Tiger-Shock" using 70,000 volts, "Thunder-Pro" using 120,000 volts, "Powermax" using 90,000 volts (imported from the USA), and the "Thunder Blaster" using 150,000 volts. The company's catalogue is produced in German, English, French, Spanish, Russian, Italian, Arabic, Polish and Turkish. It also offers to sell leg-irons.
Solid Company, Sicherheitstechnik Import & Export	Westfalenstrasse 96 D-45136 Essen Germany Tel: 49 201 516933 Fax: 49 201 516934	In 1996, this company advertised it could supply "Body-Guard" electro-shock weapons using 150,000 to 250,000 volts, 6 types of "Original Paralyser" stun devices and 3 types of "Security-Plus" stun devices using 100,000 to 200,000 volts. In October 1994, this company advertised that it could supply a range of electro-shock devices including the "Thunder" using 65,000 volts, the "Mighty" using 70,000 volts, the "Thunder-Pro" using 120,000 volts, the "Body Guard" using 150,000 volts, the "Night-Hawk Der Hammer", the "Defense" using 200,000 volts, the "Compact" using 45,000 volts, the "Pocket" using 90,000 volts, the "Spezial" using 120,000 volts, and the "Distancer" using 160,000 volts.
Wapo Electronic GmbH	Wexstrasse 26 D-10715 Berlin Germany Tel: 030 853 1091 Fax: 030 854 6025	In 1995 this company promoted the distribution of "air taser" dart-firing guns imported from the USA. The advertisement read "the attacker is unable to control his muscles for approx 30 seconds."
Geisler Defence Ltd	21 Hamesila, P O Box 484 Tel Hanan, Israel	In May 1996, this company advertised to supply "electric stun gun - ESG-501, ESG-502...We also supply brass knuckle

	Tel: 972 4 821 1541 Fax: 972 4 821 1540	<i>electric stun guns".</i>
Security World Ltd	Security World House, 79 Dov Gruner St Bnei Brak 51212, Israel Tel: 972 3 5797331 Fax: 972 3 799564	<p>In 1993, a Security World advertisement stated that the company were "<i>Specialists in electric shock mechanisms, which run off standard 9v batteries, pump out 50,000 volts, but generate a non-harmful 5-milliamps of current</i>". "<i>The Zapper is not considered a weapon in Israel, requires no licence.</i>" The company also said it produced a selection of briefcases, police batons and a transparent riot shield with the shock circuit built in. The advertisement included the following products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>Electric Shock fist unit (50,000 V). This small self-defense system stuns an attacker through a powerful electric shock. During operation it emits loud noises and sparks. The attacker suffers an extreme muscle spasm, disabling him/her.</i> * <i>Electric Shock baton for police and military forces (80,000V).</i> * <i>Electric Seat for taxis and vehicles exposed to the risk of attack (70,000V).</i> <p><i>Remote controlled products - theft proof executive briefcases protected by an electric shock unit, activated by remote control." Model 1 : Police Baton, Model 2: Personal Baton - 180,000V. " This baton complies with specifications of the Standards Institute of Israel, and meets the Institutes Standard No.438.</i></p> <p><i>Zapper - Electric Shock Stun, 70,000V. "The Zapper stuns and deters, but does NOT damage and is NOT dangerous to human beings, even not to children, elderly people or people with heart conditions or with pacemaker, etc.</i></p> <p><i>The Ministry of health has approved its credibility, assignment and proper functioning. It meets the Standards Institute current shock tests."</i></p> <p><i>Anti-Riot Stunning Police Shield - 50,000V.</i></p> <p>Security World was listed as a distributor in Israel for Electronic Security Products Co. Two subsidiary companies of Security World were reported as Security World Projects Ltd and I.B.S. Research & Development Ltd.</p>
Toa Simpson Inc	1-9-21 Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169, Japan Tel: +81 3 3204 8741 Fax: +81 3 3209 2617 E-mail: kh2y-ook @ asahi.net.or.jp	Advertised in May 1996 to sell " <i>the full line of ASP products along with its own brand of stun guns, Vesta Stun</i> ". The latter are said to use " <i>adjustable voltage</i> ".
Mantenimiento y Comercializacion Industrial SA de CV	Av Tezozomoc 292 Col. Petrolera CP 02480, Mexico Tel: 352 93 07	In 1996, this company was manufacturing electro-shock batons. In an advertisement, the company said that it had supplied "electrical sticks/prods" to Gobierno del Edo. de Guerrero, one of the state authorities in Mexico. The company also stated that it had supplied unspecified " <i>security equipment</i> " to companies in the USA. The manager of this company told a UK Dispatches undercover television team in 1996 that he was prepared to supply electro-shock batons anywhere in the world

(MACOISA)	Tlx: 1762213 MACOME Fax: (5) 352 7307	and was aware that they could be used for torture.
NII Stali (Scientific Research Institute of Steel)	81a Dubninskaya St 127411 Moscow, Russia Tel: 7 095 485 35 10 Fax: 7 095 485 43 95	In 1995, this company advertised that it could supply stun batons at international security equipment exhibitions in Paris and Moscow. It was listed in Janes International Defence Directory 1996 and 1997 as a supplier of electronic batons.
Force Products (Force Group)	P O Box 39118 Booyens Johannesburg, South Africa Tel: 27 11 434 1120 Fax: 27 11 434 1122	In 1996, Force Group was reported to be a supplier of “ <i>shock riot shields, stun guns, shock batons and anti-assault sprays.</i> ” Force Products was listed in 1995 as a manufacturer of “ <i>electrified security products</i> ”, including riot shields. In 1996, the company claimed to sell to the People’s Republic of China, Bulgaria, Egypt, Germany and the USA. Following the deaths and injuries of many commuters at the Tembisa railway station in July 1996 where electro-shock batons were used against the commuters, the chief executive of Force Products, was quoted as saying: “ <i>We do not agree with a suspension on electro-shock weapons as our products are non-lethal. However, we will welcome an investigation into our products as we feel they fall well within the human rights parameters.</i> ” A US company, B-West Imports Inc of Arizona (see below), stated in 1995 that it could supply “ <i>paralyser stun batons</i> ” and “ <i>Force shock shields</i> ” imported from South Africa. B-West issued advertisements for a “riot shield” made by Force Products in South Africa which state: “ <i>When pressing the switch, which is within easy reach of the users thumb, the front area of the shield between the aluminium bars become (sic) electrified with a voltage of up to 50,000 volts. When the human body is pressed against the Riot Shield, the aluminium bars will render an electrified shock without any harmful after effects because the voltage rendered is very high, but the current flowing through the body is very low...With small bursts of up to 5 seconds, the unit is good for several thousand bursts.</i> ”
Safe Case	PO Box 6349, Dunswart Johannesburg, South Africa Tel: 011 894 1190	The company claimed in 1996 to be able to supply electro-shock batons and stun guns to unspecified foreign buyers, and to have exhibited at international fairs in UK and Germany. Safe Case is also registered with the United Kingdom Department of Trade and Industry through the UK Defence Manufacturers Association and the UK Association of Police and Public Security Suppliers.
NitSpy Defensa Y contraespionaje	Comte Borrell, 115 08015 Barcelona, Spain Tel: 93 423 97 88 Fax: 93 428 77 76	In 1996, this company advertised "stun guns" and "electro-shock batons" in its catalogue of security equipment.
Great Cathay Products Mfg Inc	2/F No 19 Lane 160, Sung-Chiang Rd Taipei, Taiwan	In October 1996, Cathay Products advertised itself as a manufacturer of “stun guns”. These are made in Taiwan at a rate of about 2,000 per month and the company claims that 85% are exported, Europe taking 50%, the USA 15% and Asia the rest. Eastern Europe was said to now be a “booming market” for the firm. “ <i>We mainly produce higher voltage stun guns...Because they are used</i>

(Saftron Group)	Tel: 886-2-543-4914 Tlx: 28108 CPMI Fax: 886 2 5221161	<p>by security or police, demand is for higher voltage models which have greater effectiveness." The "Titan L" is a stun gun shaped like a rifle with a retractable bore which can be extended from 37cm to 70cm. It uses 40,000 volts and 0.5 amps. For personal use, the company supplies model THP-199H which uses 120,000 volts and a power consumption of 0.8 amps.</p> <p>In 1995, the company stated it could supply "Personal Protectors" in various models using up to 180,000 volts. Other products included: an "Executive Case" with 40,000 volt stun, and a "Patrolite: Flash Light, Stun Shock and Siren. Sparkles are emitted from six stainless steel bars on the head of the Patrolite. Penetrating pins can be used if the attacker is wearing heavy clothes." Types of electro-shock baton offered included: "Titan" using 80,000 volts, "Mini HV Stun Gun" using 35,000 volts, "Titan Stretchable Baton" using 30,000 or 40,000 volts, "Titan Knockable Baton" using 40,000 volts and the "Gastun Baton" for anti-riot control.</p> <p>The "Gastun Baton" was said by the company to have a plastic body "made of engineering plastics which is strong enough to undertake impact", a stun shock using 40,000 volts, "it contains red pepper solution and Du-Pont R134A propellant for 10-12 shots of spray of 2 seconds reaching up to 3 metres from the user. Red pepper causes uncontrollable sneezing, violent tearing and burning pain on skin for about 5 minutes", a "search light for patrol" and "a whistle of 100db/0.5 m provides audio warning and control".</p>
Maw Don Co Ltd	[address not known] Taiwan Tel: 886 3-956 1561 Fax: 886 3-954 4564	In 1995, this company was reported to be a manufacturer and supplier of stun guns and batons from its 20-worker factory in I-Lan, about 40 kilometers south east of Taipei. A company spokesperson told the magazine, Asian Security Products, that the company "increased production of stun guns by about 10% this year because of increased orders from Middle East buyers." The company claimed to produce about 3,000 stun guns and batons per month, with a production capacity of 5,000 per month.
Sang Min International Co Ltd	336 Cheng-Kung Rd Feng Yuan Taichung, Hsien, Taiwan Tel: 886 4 527 0577 Fax: 886 4 527 0578	In 1996, this company advertised that it was a manufacturer of the "Titan-M electronic shocker", the "200kV electric defense shield" and a range of stun guns and electric-shock batons. The company told Amnesty International that it had been "doing this business for more than 10 years...our customers are scattered all over the world... As far as we know, there are still a lot of countries producing higher voltage than we do and there is no problem. Like Korea, the companies have produced 300 KV stun guns. We have tested the results and effects of the stun guns and batons before we sell them out. They are personal security products which are not fatal to people..."
CCS Communication Control Inc	62 South Audley Street Mayfair, London W1 Tel: 0171 408 0287 Fax: 0171 629 9538 E-mail for CCS group: spyzone@webscope.com	<p>In 1995 this company's London office stated to the UK Dispatches television program investigating team that CCS New York could supply 150,000 volt, 18 inch long, electro-shock batons with a "totally electrified shaft with visible arcs running up and down the shaft". Payments would be made to the London bank of CCS.</p> <p>The company claimed to have other US offices in Beverley Hills, California, Miami and Washington, and also to have offices in Montreal, Paris, Moscow, Mexico City, Colombia and Turkey.</p>
Arianne International	Box 32112, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 333410, USA	In February 1997, this company was reported in Capital Quest as having developed the "Myotron", "...a break-through personal defense item...small enough to carry on a big key ring and flat enough to carry in a shirt pocket. It's five times more powerful than the best police stun gun..." An independent report by T'Prina Technology of Aurora, CO, in 1994 listed the company as a

	Tel: 1 800 348 2900	supplier of the "Myotron-TM Venus" stun device which was marketed for women users.
B-West Imports Inc	2425 N. Huachuca, Tucson, Arizona AZ 85745, USA Tel: 602 628 1990 Fax: 602 628 3602	<p>B-West was linked in 1995 to another US company Paralyser Protection through a common directorship. In 1994 and 1995, B-West claimed to be importing 50,000 volt electro-shock riot shields from South Africa and "in unique high quality sporting goods from around the world". "When pressing the switch, the front area of the shield between the aluminium bars becomes electrified with a voltage of up to 50,000 volts. The Riot Shield has a continuous operating time of +/- 20 minutes. With small bursts of up to 5 seconds, the unit is good for several thousand bursts." The shields' lengths are 34" to 39", widths are 23-25" and weight is 7.5lbs. The electro-shock riot shields are made in South Africa (see Force Products, South Africa, above)</p> <p>B-West also advertised the sale of "Paralyser Stun Batons from South Africa". The company claimed that "The Paralyser stun baton is the result of a unique process developed by German Scientists and doctors. The extensive testing done by the Department of Medicine at the University of Dusseldorf resulted in the ideal correlation of volts, amps and frequency to render a would-be assailant helpless without any damage to skin, eyes or internal organs. The Paralyser is constructed of high-impact ABD plastic tubing filled with solid polyurethane which encapsulates the PC board." The Professor has since told Amnesty International that he was not specifically involved in developing the "Paralyser" range of stun guns and batons, but simply tested a particular stun device for another company in March 1985, the results of which cannot be applied directly to other stun devices.</p> <p>Types of "Paralyser" advertised for sale were: <i>Compact</i>: 6.25 inches long, 80,000 volts; <i>Cobra</i>: 7 7/8 inches long, 90,000 volts; <i>Cobra Executive</i>: 7 7/8 inches long, 90,000 volts; <i>Pocket</i>: 9.5 inches long, 90,000 volts; <i>Special</i>: 11 inches long, 120,000 volts; <i>Police/Military</i>: 19.75 inches long, 120,000 volts.</p>
Nova Products Inc	48-61 Old Sparta Road Cookeville, Tennessee. TN 38501, USA Tel: 615 526 4460 Fax: 615 526 3535	<p>In 1996 Nova Products Inc marketed electro-shock weapons that were previously supplied by Nova Technologies Inc. (formerly located in Austin, Texas). The 1996 brochure offers to supply the following products:</p> <p>"Hand Held Electronic Stun Devices, Taser Technology Products, Electronic Stun Batons, Electronic Riot and Capture Shields, Prisoner Transport Belts (Electronic, remote actuated), Riot and Ballistic Shields, Training for non-lethal weapons (stun devices, stun batons, tasers, batons, electronic riot shields, pepper sprays, prisoner transport belt)..." "The new NOVA RACC (remote activated custody control) prisoner transport belt. Proven medically safe, range of up to 600 feet. Each unit has a unique code chosen from billions available. Patented."</p> <p>"Cell Extractions - the Nova Electronic Capture Shield is in use by corrections for cell extractions in 1000's of facilities. Reports indicate that intimidation by the device is adequate in many cases. The application cost is only a few pennies - one battery is good for 200-300 applications. No contamination occurs, no cleanup required, significantly reduces injuries, medically safe."</p> <p>"Non-lethal weapons training and certification, Phoenix, Arizona. Feb 5-7th, 1996. Hosted by Maricopa County Sheriff's office. Factory training and certification in the use of Nova Electronic Shields, electronic hand-held devices, telescopic electronic restraints, and the new Nova RACC Prisoner Transport belt. If you cannot attend at this time, please call and we will keep you informed of future sessions. It is anticipated that future sessions will be expanded to cover other non-lethal weapons."</p> <p>Law Enforcement Product News Sept-Oct 1995, carried a Nova Technologies advertisement including the following: "Cell Extractions - Shield delivers Quick Stun capacity. The new NOVA Electronic Power shield is designed to assist correctional officers in facility disturbances, or to help remove a resistive prisoner from his/her cell for transport or other reasons. The shield</p>

		<p><i>delivers over 40,000 volts of electricity and has the stun capacity of over 200 applications. This type of electronic restraint/control device has been proven to reduce injury to everyone involved, and with no decontamination required after use. All units and components are manufactured in the USA."</i></p> <p>In November 1992, International Procurement Services in the UK ran an advertisement for "Nova electronic power shield" and "Nova Electronic Restraint Staff". The IPS Information Sheet of 1994 states: "<i>Partial list of users of the electronic riot shield: Australia Correction facility, New South Wales; Luxembourg Special Forces, Luxembourg; Mexico Military Special Forces, Mexico;; City of Portsmouth, VA; City of San Jose, San Jose, CA Dallas; County Sheriffs Academy United Arab Emirates Military, UAE; Venezuela Military, Venezuela USA: Buena Vista Correctional Facility, Colorado, Dallas, Texas; Delta Correctional Facility, Delta, Co; Correctional Centre, Hominy, Oklahoma; Jasper County Sheriffs Dept, Carthage, MO; Johnson County Sherrifs Dept, Iowa City IA; Louisiana Corrections, Angola, LA; Okaloosa Count, Crestview, Florida; Oklahoma State Penitentiary, McAlester, Oklahoma; Oklahoma State Reformatory, Granite, OK; Oregon Department of Corrections, Salem, Oregon; Palm Beach Sherrifs Dept, Canantana, Florida; San Berardino Correction Facility, California; San Diego Correction facility, Alpine, California; Visa Detention Facility, Vista, CA; New Mexico Correctional Facility, New Mexico; US. Marshalls Immigration Dept, USA; Utah State Prison, Drapes, UT; Williamson County Jail, Georgetown, Texas; Wichita Falls County Jail, Wichita.</i></p>
<p>Safe Defense Co (Self Defense Products)</p>	<p>114 E. 3rd Street Greenville, North Carolina, NC 27858, USA Tel: 919 830 5577 Fax: 919 830 5542</p>	<p>The magazine Asian Security Products September 1996 carried a sales advertisement from Safe Defense Company which included stun guns. "<i>A stun gun is a legal self-defense device that puts out a high voltage shock...By merely touching a person with the unit, he or she is immobilized for several minutes with no permanent harm. Stun guns are legal in all but a few states and no licence or permit is required to carry them.</i>"</p> <p>The following stun weapons were advertised: "<i>Stun Master and Security Plus: SP100S 100kV, 4.5in straight; SP100C/SM100C 100kV, 4.75in curved. SP200C/SM200C 200kV 8.5in curved. Z-Force (Made in the USA): ZF-1B 80kV, 5in curved; ZF-3 100kV, 4.75in straight; ZF-4 120kV, 6in straight; ZF-6 200kV, 6.5in curved; ZF-8 160kV, 18" baton. Talon: Our top of the line Stun Gun. The first stun Gun to offer a lifetime warranty and clam shell packaging with a color backcard. Pocket Guard: The smallest unit on the market. Conceals easily. T200 200kV, 6in straight; T250 250kV, 6in, straight PG01 65kV, 4.1in straight; Air Taser Intelligent Self-Defense.</i>"</p> <p>The President of Safe Defense Company was reported by Asian Security Products magazine in November 1995 as saying "<i>These products [stun guns] have been available for a long time, but only recently did they become popular"... "We're aiming more for the independent variety store, but our units are also sold in gun shops, pawnshops, uniform stores and flea markets."</i></p>
<p>Security Depot Corp</p>	<p>1891 W. Flagler Street Miami, Florida, FL 33135, USA Tel: 305 649 4984 Fax: 305 649 4997</p>	<p>In 1995, the company claimed to supply a range of security products, including security sprays, handcuffs and thumbcuffs. Also included were the following stun guns and accessories: <i>Secret Agent Model SA-80, 80,000 volts, extremely loud electrical sound.</i> <i>Super Lightning II Model SA-90, 90,000 volts. Super Stunner Model SS-120, 120,000 volts.</i> <i>Super Baton Model SB-120 120,000 volts. Star Warrior Model SW-150, 150,000 volts (\$89.95).</i></p>

		<i>Lightning Model L-65 65,000 volts; Stunner Model S-56, 65,000 volts.</i>
Stun Tech Inc	23860 Miles Road Cleveland, Ohio. OH 44128, USA Tel: 1-800 345 7886 Fax: 216 663 9289	<p>This company's brochure states that it manufactures and markets the "Ultron II" range of stun guns, stun shields and transport belt. <i>"The Ultron II has an automatic shutdown...each time the activator switch is continually depressed for approximately 15 seconds, the unit automatically shuts off for approximately 5 seconds..."</i></p> <p>The company's advertisement in Law Enforcement Product News May-June 1994 states: <i>"A matrix system of less-than-lethal electronic immobilization weapons for ultimate suspect control and management, without area contamination. Field incident proven, Patented technology, medically tested, court recognized training available. Ultron Electronic Power Shield, Ultron II Hand Held Device, The R-E-A-C-T Belt system for the remote control of inmates and defendants."</i></p> <p>Stun Tech literature claims that its high pulse stun belt can be activated from 300 feet. After a warning noise, the Remote Electronically Activated Control Technology (REACT) belt inflicts a 50,000 volt shock using 3-4 milliamps which lasts eight seconds. The current is said to enter the prisoner's left kidney region and then the nerve pathways and blood channels. The shock causes severe pain rising during the eight seconds and instant incapacitation in the first few seconds. <i>"The active stun capability corresponds to the length of time the activator switch is depressed"</i>, according to the company manual. The company literature promotes the stun belt amongst law enforcement officers <i>"for total psychological supremacy...of potentially troublesome prisoners"</i> stating that: <i>"After all, if you were wearing a contraption around your waist that by the mere push of a button in someone else's hand, could make you defecate or urinate yourself, what would you do from the psychological standpoint?"</i></p> <p>The company manual warns law enforcement officers not to use the stun belt to <i>"unlawfully threaten, coerce, harass, taunt, belittle or abuse any person"</i>, but a company spokesperson did admit that it would be difficult to provide training to foreign customers.</p> <p>To address liability claims, every prisoner required to wear the stun belt is "asked" by the US Bureau of Prisons to sign a form entitled "Inmate Notification of Custody Control Belt Use". This form is virtually identical to that promoted by Stun Tech for use by all law enforcement agencies. Both forms advise prisoners that activation of the stun belt causes <i>"immobilization causing you to fall to the ground; possibility of self-defecation; possibility of self-urination"</i> and state that activation could occur <i>"under the following actions on your behalf"</i> including <i>"any outburst or quick movement"</i>, <i>"any tampering with the belt"</i>, <i>"failure to comply with a verbal command for movement of your person"</i> and <i>"any loss of visual contact by the officer in charge"</i>. The company insists that only "authorized" and trained law enforcement officers should use a stun belt on prisoners, and it offers up to six hours training.</p> <p>Stun Tech has admitted that since 1993 stun belts have been accidentally activated by law enforcement officers nine times, as many times as they were deliberately activated. The company's spokesperson has also confirmed that the belt can be set off repeatedly with only a one-second delay. The company's manual stated that <i>"as long as it is not used for officer gratification or punishment, liability is non-existent."</i></p> <p>A Bureau of Prisons (BoP) policy statement (P.S. 5558.10) dated September 30, 1994 authorises the BOP to force maximum custody inmates to wear what it describes as a 'Remote Electronically Activated Technology (REACT) Stun Belt' as a custody control tool to be used within the BOP. Prisoners are "asked" to sign the "Inmate Notification of Custody Control Belt Use" form.</p>
Tasertron	1785 Pomona Rd, Suite C Corona, California, CA 91720, USA	The original company making dart firing taser guns, Taser Industries based in Monrovia, was reported to have collapsed in 1986.

	<p>Tel: 909 340 0896 Fax: 909 340 0899</p>	<p>In 1995 Tasertron stated that <i>“The Taser is a very effective, less than lethal, law enforcement tool. Has been used successfully for over 15 years by more than 320 law enforcement agencies. The LA Police Dept, Houston Police Dept, New York City PD and the Corrections systems of over 12 states are among the many law enforcement organisations that rely on Taser as the alternative to deadly force.”</i></p> <p>The Orange County Business Journal (8/6/92) reported that <i>“Tasertrons clients in Orange County include : US Marshalls office, Santa Ana and Fullerton Police Departments.... The Tasertron sells for approx \$460 each and the cartridges containing the barbs that deliver the weapons' electric current cost \$98 per six-pack. Annual sales (91) in the order of 2000 a year. Unlike a stun gun, which requires the user to be within arms length of the suspect, the Taser, can be fired from 15 feet away. The weapon fires a pair of tiny barbs attached to two 15-foot wire. When the barbs hit their target the gun delivers a 50,000 volt jolt that incapacitates the target.... The company buys the parts for the guns (the housing for the weapons is provided by H&R Plastics in Orange), and assembles them at a small plant in Banning, in Riverside County.... ”</i></p> <p>The Los Angeles Police Department was reported to be the first major customer for taser guns in 1980. (Although a June 1992 report from the Los Angeles Grand Jury recommended that the LA Sheriffs dept replace the Taser with the Arwen gun). A 1992 Cincinnati Police Division Chemical Aerosol Report stated that the taser gun <i>"was used five times by Division personnel in 1991, the taser was effective only 40% of the time."</i></p>
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