



Uploaded to VFC Website

▶▶ **November 2012** ◀◀

This Document has been provided to you courtesy of Veterans-For-Change!

Feel free to pass to any veteran who might be able to use this information!

For thousands more files like this and hundreds of links to useful information, and hundreds of "Frequently Asked Questions, please go to:

[Veterans-For-Change](http://www.veteransforchange.org)

*Veterans-For-Change is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation
Tax ID #27-3820181*

If Veteran's don't help Veteran's, who will?

We appreciate all donations to continue to provide information and services to Veterans and their families.

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=WGT2M5UTB9A78

Note:

VFC is not liable for source information in this document, it is merely provided as a courtesy to our members.



Item ID Number 05586

Not Scanned

Author

Corporate Author

Report/Article Title Comments from Bart Kull, Special Assistant to the Deputy Undersecretary for Intergovernmental Affairs, HHS, Alternate Chair, Agent Orange Working Group, to National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Conference, American Legion, regarding, Agent Orange Research Overview, dated February 15, 1982, Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Journal/Book Title

Year 1982

Month/Day

Color

Number of Images 8

Description Notes

COMMENTS: BART KULL
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY
FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS HHS
ALTERNATE CHAIR, AGENT ORANGE WORKING GROUP

TO: NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION CONFERENCE
AMERICAN LEGION

DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 1982

PLACE: CAPITAL HILTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SUBJECT: AGENT ORANGE RESEARCH OVERVIEW

THERE ARE A LOT OF FALSE ASSUMPTIONS MAKING THE ROUNDS ABOUT WHAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS, OR IS NOT, DOING IN EFFORTS TO GET TO THE TRUTH OF THE ISSUE OF AGENT ORANGE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE HEALTH OF VIETNAM VETERANS.

IN VARIOUS STATES, LEGISLATION IS BEING INTRODUCED AND PASSED BECAUSE, I THINK, OF A PERCEPTION THAT THE FED IS NOT DOING ANYTHING. THAT'S NOT REALLY THE FAULT OF THE STATES SO MUCH AS IT IS OUR FAULT. TRUTH IS, NOT A VERY GOOD JOB HAS BEEN DONE TO GET INFORMATION OUT TO THE PUBLIC. ADDED TO THAT IS THE TENDENCY ON THE PART OF THE NEWS MEDIA TO GO FOR THE SPECTACULAR, WHICH IS TOO OFTEN THE EXPRESSION OF THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF A GIVEN PROBLEM. A PROTEST MARCH ABOUT A PROBLEM GENERALLY GETS HIGHER BILLING THAN A SCIENTIST SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM IN SOME QUIET LAB.

IT'S HARD TO FAULT THAT. DAY-TO-DAY NEWS, AS I BELIEVE WALTER CRONKITE ONCE PUT IT, IS ABOUT THE CATS WHO RAN AWAY LAST NIGHT.

THAT'S WHY ARTICLES SUCH AS "AGENT ORANGE, A SEARCH FOR ANSWERS," IS SO IMPORTANT. IT GIVES, AS COMMENTATOR PAUL HARVEY SAYS, "THE REST OF THE STORY."

WE ARE MAKING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO BE A GOOD DEAL MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEED FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION. JIM TOUCHED ON THE EVIDENCE OF THAT WHEN HE SPOKE OF SECRETARY SCHWEIKER'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VERIFICATION OF AGENT ORANGE AERIAL DUMPS. CHUCK HAGEL, OVER AT THE VA, IS DETERMINED THAT THAT AGENCY BE MORE OPEN AND RESPONSIVE TO THIS WHOLE AREA OF CONCERN.

WE ARE INSISTING THAT SCIENTISTS SUBMIT UPDATES ON RESEARCH ACTIVITIES WRITTEN IN LAYMAN'S LANGUAGE.

RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE 25 SEPARATE, COMPLEX AND EXPENSIVE RESEARCH STUDIES UNDERWAY OR COMPLETED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEALING WITH DIOXINS.

THERE ARE OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS GOING FORWARD IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.

I WOULD LIKE TO BRIEFLY OUTLINE FOR YOU SOME OF THE MAJOR RESEARCH EFFORTS UNDERWAY.

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IS ESTABLISHING A REGISTRY OF PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAVE WORKED ON THE PRODUCTION OF DIOXIN CONTAMINATED MATERIALS SUCH

AS 2-4-5T, ONE OF THE COMPONENTS OF AGENT ORANGE. SINCE 1979, THEY'VE BEEN COLLECTING WORK HISTORIES GOING BACK TO THE 1940'S. THE INFORMATION WILL GIVE AN INDICATION OF WHETHER DIOXIN-EXPOSED WORKERS DIE AT A RATE, OR FROM CAUSES DIFFERENT FROM, THE GENERAL POPULATION. PRELIMINARY RESULTS ARE EXPECTED IN LATE 1983. IT'S CALLED THE "DIOXIN REGISTRY."

THAT SAME INSTITUTE IS ALSO INVESTIGATING AN ASSOCIATION BETWEEN WORK-PLACE EXPOSURE TO HERBICIDES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MALIGNANT TUMOR KNOWN AS SOFT TISSUE SARCOMA...A FORM OF CANCER. IT APPEARS, FROM STUDIES IN SWEDEN AND IN THIS COUNTRY, THAT THERE IS A LINK. THAT HAS TO BE CONFIRMED. THE DIOXIN REGISTRY WILL BE HELPFUL IN ARRIVING AT A DEFINITE CONCLUSION.

SINCE 1968, THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL HAS KEPT A REGISTRY OF ALL BABIES BORN WITH BIRTH DEFECTS IN THE METROPOLITAN ATLANTA AREA. BASED ON THE REGISTRY, THEY HAVE BEGUN A STUDY DESIGNED TO DETERMINE IF VIETNAM VETERANS ARE AT INCREASED RISK OF HAVING BABIES BORN WITH SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS. THEY HAVE IDENTIFIED 7,500 BIRTH-DEFECTED BABIES, MANY THE CHILDREN OF VIETNAM VETERANS. A CONTROL GROUP OF 3000 BABIES BORN WITHOUT DEFECTS WILL BE USED.

IF THE STUDY DEMONSTRATES THAT VIETNAM VETERANS HAVE AN INCREASED RISK OF FATHERING A CHILD WITH A DEFECT IT MUST THEN BE DETERMINED, IF POSSIBLE, IF THE INCREASE IS ASSOCIATED WITH AGENT ORANGE EXPOSURE OR WITH SOME OTHER FACTOR. THE STUDY IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER OF NEXT YEAR.

A VERY IMPORTANT RESEARCH EFFORT THAT IS MOVING AHEAD RAPIDLY IS BEST KNOWN AS THE "RANCH HAND STUDY." IT DEALS WITH THE PILOTS AND CREWS, KNOWN AS THE RANCH HANDERS, WHO ACTUALLY SPRAYED AGENT ORANGE AND OTHER HERBICIDES FROM FIXED WING AIRCRAFT IN VIETNAM. THEY WERE HEAVILY EXPOSED.

THE AIR FORCE HAS CONTRACTED WITH THE LOU HARRIS AGENCY TO CONDUCT A FACE-TO-FACE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT DEALS WITH STATISTICAL DATA, HEALTH PROBLEMS, SYMPTOMS AND SO ON, OF BOTH THE VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THERE ARE ABOUT 1200 RANCH HAND PERSONNEL INVOLVED, ALONG WITH 1200 OTHER PEOPLE NOT EXPOSED (FOR CONTROL). ABOUT HALF OF THOSE QUESTIONNAIRES ARE NOW COMPLETED. THAT PHASE ENDING IN APRIL WILL COST ONE MILLION DOLLARS. THE NEXT STEP WILL BRING THESE PEOPLE TO HOUSTON FOR A THREE-DAY, IN DEPTH, PHYSICAL EXAMINATION. THAT PHASE HAS ALREADY BEGUN AND WILL BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER.

EVERYTHING WILL THEN BE COMPUTERIZED AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND THE EXAMS WILL BE MADE. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT WE WILL HAVE PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS BY THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR. THAT SECOND PHASE WILL COST ABOUT FIVE MILLION DOLLARS.

THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE HAS COMPLETED A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO DETERMINE WHETHER DIOXIN CAN BE MEASURED IN HUMAN FAT TISSUE AND WHETHER ITS PRESENCE COULD BE USED TO DETERMINE EXPOSURE TO AGENT ORANGE. ON THE BASIS OF A SMALL SAMPLING OF EXPOSED AND UNEXPOSED PERSONS, IT WAS REVEALED THAT EXPOSURE AND HEALTH STATUS DID NOT CORRELATE WITH DETECTED LEVELS OF DIOXIN. HOWEVER, THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE ASSAY METHOD WAS FEASIBLE, BUT TOO DELICATE AND DIFFICULT TO BE A USEFUL ASSAY METHOD AT THIS TIME.

IN MEASURING DIOXIN IN BODY FAT TISSUE, YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THREE AND FOUR PARTS PER TRILLION. THE EQUIPMENT AND EXPERTISE TO DO THIS ARE NOT FULLY DEVELOPED. SCIENTISTS TELL ME THAT ONCE YOU'VE FOUND IT--AT A COST OF TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS PER ASSAY--YOU STILL HAVEN'T GOT ANYTHING BECAUSE IT IS NOT KNOWN IF IT IS THE CAUSE OF ANY DISEASE.

JIM SPOKE ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE VA EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDY MANDATED BY CONGRESS WHICH IS IN ITS BEGINNING STAGES OF PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT.

AND FINALLY, A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE WORLD-WIDE LITERATURE ON AGENT ORANGE AND OTHER PHENOXY HERBICIDES HAS BEEN COMPLETED. THIS WILL ASSIST RESEARCHERS TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP NEW KNOWLEDGE BASED ON WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN AND PUBLISHED. COPIES HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO INVOLVED AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS AS WELL AS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA.

AS YOU CAN SEE, A GREAT DEAL IS BEING DONE IN TERMS OF RESEARCH.

WE WILL HAVE ANSWERS, AT LEAST THE ANSWERS THAT THE BEST SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CAN PRODUCE, TO THE QUESTIONS THAT WEIGH MOST HEAVILY ON THE MINDS OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES...AND ON YOUR MINDS AND OURS.

AS JIM HAS SAID, THE AGENT ORANGE WORKING GROUP WILL NOT CAVE IN TO POLITICAL PRESSURES OR EMOTIONAL HYSTERIA TO PROVIDE QUICK AND EASY ANSWERS...THERE JUST AREN'T ANY. NEITHER WILL

WE PERMIT THIS ISSUE TO BE SIDESTEPED OR UNNECESSARILY
DELAYED. THAT WOULD BE A BETRAYAL OF THOSE WHO SERVED THEIR
COUNTRY WHEN CALLED UPON TO DO SO.