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US Continues to Deny Agent Orange Use in Korea. Guam next?

[Larry Nader](#) Published on May 16, 2017

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An 8-month investigation just completed for evidence of agent orange usage on a base in South Korea. ([see article here](#)) The investigation was unable to uncover the actual use of the highly toxic herbicide on or around the base despite first-hand reports from us military veterans who served there and admit to following orders to bury hundreds of barrels in a trench on Camp Carroll.

The key paragraph in this article is, "In addition, "interviews with 172 former Camp Carroll employees, as well as document research by 32 organizations, revealed that herbicides, pesticides, solvents and other chemicals - not Agent Orange - were buried in Area D (where the burial allegedly took place) and later excavated and shipped to the U.S.," the press release said."

As former military myself, what I read in this paragraph is the following. "Yes, there were barrels of rainbow herbicides (possibly Agent Orange), pesticides and other chemicals that we the US military buried there in 1978. However, we have since gone back, removed all evidence and destroyed all paperwork that would support any veterans claims to exposure to toxic chemicals. So, too bad veterans. Just lay down and die already will you."

Another thing that was known to happen was to falsify shipping bills of laden to call Agent Orange by another name when shipping it. This was done with the intent of denying it was ever shipped through bases in the US or through other countries on its way to Vietnam. Yes, that is MY takeaway. It is the equivalent to cleaning up a murder scene and then saying sorry, no proof, no murder.

Removing the murder evidence from a crime scene doesn't make that victim any less dead or the murderer any less guilty, it just cleans the hands of the murder(s). Such is the case here. Our government has done a great job of removing all evidence (cleaning their hands) of the use of

rainbow chemicals in Korea and as a result, the vets who served there rot away from the inside out and slowly die. Sorry if that upsets you but it is a fact.

Our government lies in their political dealings every day so what's the big deal, right? Well, what if this was your father, son, daughter. or mother? What about your grandchild? These veterans have also had a high number of birth defects in their families having handed down this toxin from generation to generation.

What is to be gained by these veterans lying about their first-hand reports? All that headache and resistance just to get a measly \$300 or so a month in disability benefits and sub-par medical treatments by the VA? I think not. I fully believe these veterans as well as veterans who sprayed agent orange on Guam such as Master Sergeant Leroy Foster. MSGT foster has been slowly decaying inside. He has fought various cancers several times as well as having his spine deteriorate



to the point of being confined to a wheelchair. His current health is not good and we do not know how much longer he will be able to hold on while the fight continues to obtain benefits for him and others who served on Guam before, during and following the Vietnam War.

First-hand accounts by Foster and several other veterans who admit to spraying agent orange on Guam in the 60s, 70s, and 80s continue

to be ignored by the Department of Defense and VA benefits are continued to be denied as a result. Tens of thousands of veterans were exposed to Silvex/Dioxins, DDT, PCEs and TCEs on Guam due to the use of rainbow herbicides, such as agent orange, as well as pesticides, degreasers, and other chemicals. These chemicals not only get into the soil, and into the air when the soil is disturbed, but they also seep into the underground water supply.

Such was the case in Guam where these highly toxic and deadly chemicals made their way into the underground aquifers that fed the island's water supply. These chemicals/poisons were in the water fed to our bases and ships. It was in the water we showered in daily. It was in the water we drank and cooked with. It was in the ground soil and the air of areas that we hiked and off-roaded in. Today these veterans still have one thing in common. Unexplained diseases that are all remarkably similar to each other, a high cancer rate, joint deterioration, mental issues very similar to PTSD, and more. Even Tinnitus is a symptom of this exposure.

While many veterans have decided it isn't worth the long dragged-out fight the DOD poses and have chosen to go quietly into the night, others have taken up the battle and have taken the fight to our very government. The government that we once protected and defended. The very government which poisoned and killed us. The very government that continues to deny it ever happened all because the repercussions would be all too expensive for them to deal with. These veterans will **NOT** go quietly.

The US government can barely afford to provide arms and supplies to fight our current wars and we are looking at the brink of a possibly World War III if global tensions continue on their current path. Now imagine how expensive this would be if they admitted to contaminating Guam, Korea, Okinawa, Thailand, Cambodia and other locations where Agent Orange and other rainbow chemicals were widely used in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Imagine not only the financial repercussions but the political repercussions from our now allies such as South Korea and Japan (who owns Okinawa) for contaminating their land and people. Not only would the US be on the hook for providing benefits and health treatments to all the hundreds of thousands of veterans who were exposed but the countless residents of these countries who were exposed in addition to the political back eye they would receive. Also, factor in the children and grandchildren who have been born with illnesses and deformities related to this exposure. Now can you understand why they hold so steadfast to their lies and deceit?

This is the government we have created and elected. This is not a Trump or Obama thing (it started well before either of them). This is not a Democrat vs. Republican things (it's much bigger than that). This is what the world leader in freedom and democracy looks like when you pull aside the Uncle Sam mask. It is a monstrous political machine that is bigger than any one person or any group of people. And, if you try to unmask the truth, they roll over you in the process. My favorite line from The Wizard of Oz, "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain."

While I am a strong supporter in the fight to force the US Department of Defence and our political leaders to admit rainbow herbicides and pesticides were not only used on Guam but they have indeed lead to our ongoing, deteriorating health conditions, I realistically believe the investigation on Guam will go the way of this Korea investigation. These are not independent investigators with immunity. These are investigators that report directly to our government and know better than to admit any wrongdoing. We vets are used to this. It is called "Deny, Deny until they die," an infamous saying around the VA.

Most of us have made peace with the fact that we were exposed by the very government that we protected and defended and that we will eventually succumb to the toxins. We also are well aware that our elected officials are not our friends or protectors, despite what they promised when we were drafted/enlisted or at every election cycle. They are merely a part of the political machine.

While we are given the cold shoulder by most Americans and political leaders regarding our issues, there are a few who are supportive in our fight. Those such as Kyla Mora, a reporter for the Pacific Daily News, who has written countless articles regarding this battle. Also included on the Friends of Agents Orange Veterans of Guam list are, news stations WFLA and WFTV in Florida for airing several segments about MSGT Foster. These segments, as well as Mora's reports in the Pacific Daily News, led to Rep. Dennis Ross(R) - FL sponsoring a bill that is currently in front of the US House called The Foster Act, HR-809.

Along with Rep Ross' sponsorship, the bill has been co-sponsored by Rep. Juan Vargas (D) - CA, Madeleine Bordallo (D) - GU, Rep. Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (D) - AS, Rep. Bradley Byrne (R) - AL, Paul Gosar (R) - AZ, and Rep. Robert Brady (D) - PA. The bill is officially known as HR-809 but is titled The Foster Act, named after MSGT Foster who spearheaded this fight. Please note the bipartisan support being received for The Foster Act. That is a very positive note.

Hopefully, the investigation on Guam finds enough evidence to support our first-hand sworn testimonies and the Foster Act will be enacted, opening the way for those exposed to file claims for benefits and obtain the much-needed medical tests and treatments.

As Americans we can no longer continue to stand by blindly as we send off today's young men and women to serve our country in fighting wars with no clear definition or resolution in sight, only to turn our backs on them when they return missing body parts, suffering from ungodly diseases or fighting mental battles such as Traumatic Brain Injuries or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We must demand our government and military leaders are accountable and take responsibility to provide the care and treatment needed by these warriors for as long as it is required. If this is something that we cannot afford as a society, then **WAR** is also something that we cannot afford.

I personally do not believe in sending one more American to fight a war in a foreign country for the benefit of big corporations and oil only to discard them like a well-used tool when our leaders are done with them. This happened in World War I, World War II, the Korea Conflict, the Vietnam War and continues today in the Middle East. We send the faceless men and women to fight wars that have very little to do with protecting our personal freedoms only to treat them like pit-bulls following a dog fight. Actually, there are laws protecting the treatment of animals, but none protecting our US Service personnel from mistreatment by our government. It is just wrong and if, as a country, we are not better than this then we are destined to fall.

Please take a stand. Contact your US Representatives and Congresspersons and demand that they support HR-809, The Foster Act. Most of the veterans who suffer from these conditions were exposed to Agent Orange four decades ago or more and have only recently found out about this exposure. We need your support. No amount of treatments will save or cure us. But as service members who proudly served the US in wartime as well as peace, it is the right things to do.

The above article and comments are my own and are not reflective of any organization or group, current, past or present.

Larry Nader - United States Navy 1976-1982

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