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I reenlisted with the 101st and again went back to Korea in June of 1978. I was assigned to the 5th Preventive Medicine Unit (PMU) LC Detachment in Yongsan, Seoul Korea as the Motor Sgt. I had some strange assignments while in the military and this was one of them. As a Wheel Vehicle Mechanic (63B40) I was afforded the opportunity to serve in many different types of Army units. But this one changed my life forever.

This Unit consisted of about 50 people and had many missions within the Republic of Korea. Disease Vector Control being the main mission. We tried to control the Rat Populations, Mesquitoes, Mites, Crabs and all other creepy crawlers that could spread disease to our Soldiers.

My Vehicles mostly ¼ ton Jeep M151A2's had Vynal tanks mounted in the back seat area with a spray unit that were full of Herbicide. A Pesticide/Fungicide/Insecticide mixture (Deathicide) was applied using battery operated back pack spray units inside Mess Facilities, Billet and latrine areas. The medics would travel TDY and inspect US Mess Facilities, Water Purification Systems, and Billet areas at all US Camps in the Republic of Korea. These Application's of "Cides" treated these areas of pests, insects, fungus and weed problems.

While the Medics traveled the country they also were tasked with collecting samples of Air, Water, Soil, Foodstuffs (meat, fish and poultry), Milk, local drinks, candy, ice cream, animals ect.ect. from the local market places around the Camps. We operated a Laboratory in Yongsan that was staffed with US, Katusa, and Korean Scientists to test the collected samples for contamination.

We published a list of all the Items found to be contaminated and placed them off limits to all US personnel. Even towns were placed off limits. Certain sections of cities were also placed off limits.

After many nights in the barracks listening to the Techs and Medics I realized I poisoned on my first tour in Korea. I've had chronic kidney stones and liver problems since the mid 70's. What they tested was contaminated with either human and rat fecal matter, urine, or chemicals of some sort. The popular OB Beer was contaminated with Human fecal matter. Some of the local brews were also made with Formaldehyde instead of standard alcohol. Ice machines in the Village bars were the worst.

Anyway, all the Items found to be contaminated were published on a list and sent out to all commands for distribution and posting. The list didn't say why the Items were off limits only that they were. Fecal matter was found in the local water supplies. All local water in Korea was placed off limits to US troops.

The mission of pest control was all new to me. After much thought I think I as the motor Sgt should have been licensed or trained to handle the equipment but I was not. We had pumps and sprayers of different types. Some were back pack type others were large truck mounting spraying devices. The medics would always spray our barracks heavily. One of my trucks (5ton M54a1) would drive around and leave a big fog of pesticide spray were ever it went. It drove around the main compound often and also came to the Motor pool and barracks area where we stayed. Back then who knew! We would stand around in the fog until it dissipated. I think our barracks was sprayed more than any other because that's were the medics lived so they had the opportunity to spray ours whenever they wanted. There was also lindane in my bunk on a few occasions. I know I was exposed to mant "CIDES" in this unit and should have been trained in its proper handling. I hope that this shortcoming of local engineering has been corrected to protect mechanics in these types of units. I was exposed to a lot of pesticide on this tour.

One of the strangest missions that I knew of was the collecting of Mites, Midges and Mosquitoes. While my vehicles were out on missions I was required to work for the Entomologist / Epidemiologist at the Laboratory Cpts Hunt and Flicheer. Next to the Laboratory there was a building with a whole section of cages for animals. Mostly mite infested rats and birds. The rats were periodically brought into another room with a large pool of water with screened cages above the water. The rats were placed over the water in the screened cages. The room was air conditioned with temperature controls. The temperature would be changed in the room in such a drastic fashion that the mites would fall off of the rats and land in the pool of water below. The mites would float on top of the water. After a while the whole top of the water would be covered with mites. The rats would be removed and the mites would be skimmed off the top of the water.