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Congressman sees Target 8 report, wants probe into Agent Orange use in Guam

By [Steve Andrews](#) Published: January 9, 2017, 4:53 pm Updated: January 9, 2017, 6:44 pm

TAMPA, Fla. (WFLA) — Congressman Dennis Ross, (R) Lakeland, has joined a congresswoman from Guam in requesting answers from the military following what they call a deeply disturbing Target 8 report.

That story about a Lakeland veteran who sprayed hundreds of thousands of gallons of Agent Orange at a Guam base is making waves from Washington D.C. to the Pacific. It's made headlines in the Pacific Daily News, the Guam Daily Post, Radio New Zealand, and Radio Australia.

Now, Congressman Ross is asking for a congressional investigation into the use of Agent Orange on U.S. military installations in Guam.

Citing a Target 8 report, Congressman Ross wrote a letter to the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. He wrote that a local television station aired a story about an Air Force veteran living in Lakeland who described spraying two to three trailers full of agent Orange on a daily basis while at Andersen Air Force base. where

"This veteran, who was stationed at Andersen Air Force Base during the Vietnam war, has over thirty diseases, several cancers, and his own grandchild was born with twenty-four fingers and toes. All of these horrible afflictions have been associated with exposure to Agent Orange," Ross' letter stated.

Veteran Leroy Foster admits that in the 60's and 70's, he exposed U.S. Air Force personnel, their families and civilians in Guam to Agent Orange.

"Nobody told them what was going to happen and it destroyed families," said retired Master Sgt. Leroy Foster.

One day after Target 8's report in which Mr. Foster expressed extreme remorse for spraying the defoliant at Andersen A.F.B., Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo of Guam conveyed her concerns.

In a letter to Major General Steven Basham, Air Force legislative liaison director, Congresswoman Bordallo wrote; "I am deeply disturbed with the recent claims that Agent Orange was actively used at Andersen Air Force Base (AAFB) during the 1960's and 1970's."

Agent Orange is presumed to cause several types of cancer as well as diabetes and heart disease in those exposed to it.

Congresswoman Bordallo added that in light of the recent allegations, she wants a briefing from appropriate personnel detailing the handling of Agent Orange at the base.

"This is to include through trans-shipment, storage, usage, or any other means of potential contact for Airmen and civilians on base," the letter stated.

Congresswoman Bordallo asked for information about any use of the toxic defoliant sanctioned or unsanctioned.

B-52 bombers were loaded with bombs at Andersen for missions over Vietnam.

The Department of Defense has denied using the herbicide on Guam.

Leroy Foster, calls that a lie. "I don't deserve to be lied to, I don't. And the people I exposed to it, they don't deserve to be lied to," he said. Foster claims he was told that he could brush his teeth with Agent Orange and that it was not harmful. He says he sprayed the powerful defoliant on Andersen's flight line, sidewalks, around barracks and fences.

"I sprayed it on base, everywhere," he stated. "They wanted to have the base beautiful. They didn't want any vegetation growing around the sidewalks or the barracks, around any buildings or fences."

He claims military personnel, their families, and civilians were all exposed.

"Thousands, thousands of innocent civilians, and military dependents, children," Mr. Foster explained.

Last year, a study of Guam by the Hawaii Journal of Medicine and Public Health found; "Infants born to mothers who lived in Agent Orange-sprayed areas... were at an increased risk of infant mortality due to congenital anomalies."

Foster's granddaughter was born with 24 fingers and toes. He suffers from five cancers.

Mr. Foster wants the truth finally brought out.

"Don't lie to me anymore, don't lie to the American people they don't deserve it," he said.

Congressman Ross' letter to the House Armed Services Committee pointed out he has also written the Secretary of the Air Force requesting more information about the use of Agent Orange on Guam during the Vietnam conflict.

He asked, "Is the use of Agent Orange on U.S. military installations in Guam being investigated by the House Armed Services Committee? If not, I'm requesting a vigorous oversight investigation into the matter. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter."

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