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VVA National President calls for a declassification of all DOD info on Agent Orange Exposure

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2009

No. 09-13

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Vietnam Veterans of America: Crying Need to Deal with Agent Orange Problems Here in America

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - "Vietnam Veterans of America applauds the conclusions and recommendations of a Ford Foundation-funded report issued today by the National Organization on Disabilities on the effects of Agent Orange in Vietnam," said John Rowan, VVA National President. "While VVA feels compassion for the many adults and children injured and made ill by exposure to Agent Orange and the many other toxins used in Vietnam during the war there, it is now time to fully deal with the same effects on Americans who served in Vietnam and other areas that were also contaminated. The effects of these toxins on the children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren must similarly be addressed."

The U.S. government currently is not studying the possible intergenerational effects of exposure to Agent Orange, nor are they doing any morbidity studies at the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or anywhere else.

Rowan called for "the immediate de-classification of all Department of Defense information that pertains to exposure of U.S. military servicemembers to any toxin at any time, to include the Vietnam Era" and to take immediate steps to begin epidemiological studies, birth defects registries, and outreach necessary to scientifically document the problems suffered by our veterans and their offspring.

"Dow Chemical is not going to fund these studies," Rowan said. "Only the U.S. government can reasonably be expected to fund this vital research, and they have not been doing their job. In fact, it would appear that for the last decade that our government has been doing everything possible to prevent such studies from being done.

"That the Administration is adding another \$3 million to the \$3 million already pledged from the Ford Foundation for work to help those suffering in Vietnam is fine and good," Rowan said. "However, there needs to be at least a commensurate commitment by the U.S. government and the Ford Foundation to American veterans and their families. Under a new President, now is the time for a dramatic change of direction for our country. Similarly, now is the time for a new direction from the Ford Foundation."

AVVA National President applauds Agent Orange report

ASSOCIATES OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

RELEASE

June 2, 2009

No. 09-1

Press Release

Agent Orange, We Live It Every Day

(Washington, D.C.) - The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., (AVVA) applauds the National Organization of Disabilities and Ford Foundation for the release today of U.S. Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange: Understanding the Impact 40 Years Later.

Said Elaine Simmons, National President of AVVA, "As the families, friends, and supporters of our nation's Vietnam veterans, we know, only too well, the long-lasting, debilitating effects of Agent Orange/dioxin, because we face them in our daily lives, as we attend to our sick and disabled."

"We find it ironic, however, that this brutally honest assessment--which concludes that, forty years after the war, "It is still not too late to correct lapses in the nation's treatment of veterans who were exposed to dioxin during the Vietnam War"--is the byproduct of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group on Agent Orange/Dioxin, a group whose primary missions are to raise awareness and mobilize resources .for the Dioxin damage to Vietnam, the country, and its people.

"Unfortunately, it is 'way too late' for so many our veterans--we remember them at the In Memory Plaque, when we visit The Wall, in Washington D.C. As families, we stand together, way too often, at the funerals of our beloved veterans, who are dying at a rate, from Agent Orange related diseases, that breaks our hearts on a daily basis.

"Lovingly, we scrutinize our new grandbabies, praying that we won't see evidence of birth defects, learning disabilities, and cancers, which seem to strike us at a rate that is so much higher than our non-veteran families-Agent Orange, we say." And if Agent Orange rears its ugly head, we pray we can help our children learn to live with these disabilities and diseases.

"We will continue to hope. If it takes addressing the effects of Agent Orange/dioxin in Vietnam to focus on addressing the lapses in care in America, then we will demand that our nation, when providing aid to our former enemy will, finally, address the needs of our veterans and their families at home.

The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is a national, nonprofit membership and service organization dedicated to advancing the full range of issues affecting all veterans, their families, and their communities. Our more than 6,000 members are families, friends, and supporters of Vietnam veterans, as well as Vietnam veterans and veterans of other eras.

AGENT ORANGE...AND CONGRESS DID NOTHING!

New AO update at:

Some possible good news but only possible.

<http://www.2ndbattalion94thartillery.com/Chas/AOupdatec.htm>

Kelley
Agent Orange Update

Finally; at last a non-government association that receives no money or grants from our government is speaking out and maybe it just might be some good news on our Herbicide Issues. I say maybe; because the long arm of our cover-up the mistakes no matter how many Veterans/Widows/Offspring it may have damaged government still might get to them. As they have in the past with others that tried to report the real facts.

I will let you read for yourselves the report being presented to Congress.

Now as in the past will they do nothing except enable the cover-ups by DoD and VA? My guess is yes they will do NOTHING! Except say we need better communications as they have in the past when even government scientists brought forth issues. And Veterans elect the same folks time after time?????

That link is located at:

<http://www.2ndbattalion94thartillery.com/Chas/impactAO.htm>

U.S. Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange:
National Organization on Disability
With funding from the Ford Foundation
Special Initiative on Agent Orange/Dioxin
June 1, 2009

Already some of the Veterans Groups you pay your dues to so they can supposedly represent you have all of sudden after seeing this report are jumping on the bandwagon. I would point out that these same groups have remained silent for at least 40 years when they should have been demanding and not just whispering the issues. Especially since our congress has somehow deemed they alone speak for the entire Veterans Community. All so assuming at least on face value that the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs has no influence in your "so called" representation with your real representation.

I am sure these VSO's will now all of sudden come out of the woodwork with demands; all be it a façade or not after 40 years of silence will be up to you to decide.

Also in this report you will find issues and facts that will never be reported on the broadcast media or in the print media. ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN would never bring these issues to the forefront of the public in their lack of concern for what our own government has done to its Veterans and the civilian population in general. Yes, as Dr. Birnbaum concluded in her presentation "Are We All At Risk" from these toxic chemicals regardless of source and the

byproduct of dioxins; the answer was yes. While diminished some since the mandates were tightened in the 80's and 90's for control and banning of some of these products and the environment improvements of residuals from that time of infancy of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) when the chemical companies and their representatives with millions in lobby money practically ran the fledgling EPA.

Birth Defects:

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Int J Epidemiol. 2006 Oct;35(5):1220-30. Epub 2006 Mar 16. <!--[if !vml]--><!--[endif]-->

Comment in: Int J Epidemiol. 2006 Oct;35(5):1230-2.

Association between Agent Orange and birth defects: systematic review and meta-analysis.

Ngo AD, Taylor R, Roberts CL, Nguyen TV.

School of Public Health, University of Texas Health Science Center, USA.

BACKGROUND: The association between parental exposure to Agent Orange or dioxin and birth defects is controversial, due to inconsistent findings in the literature. The principal aim of this study was to conduct a meta-analysis of relevant epidemiological studies that examined this association and to assess the heterogeneity among studies. **METHODS:** Relevant studies were identified through a computerized literature search of Medline and Embase from 1966 to 2002; reviewing the reference list of retrieved articles and conference proceedings; and contacting researchers for unpublished studies. A specified protocol was followed to extract data on study details and outcomes. Both fixed-effects and random-effects models were used to synthesize the results of individual studies. The Cochrane Q test and index of heterogeneity (I²) were used to evaluate heterogeneity, and a funnel plot and Egger's test were used to evaluate publication bias.

RESULTS: In total, 22 studies including 13 Vietnamese and nine non-Vietnamese studies were identified. The summary relative risk (RR) of birth defects associated with exposure to Agent Orange was 1.95 [95% confidence interval (95% CI) 1.59-2.39], with substantial heterogeneity across studies. Vietnamese studies showed a higher summary RR (RR = 3.00; 95% CI 2.19-4.12) than non-Vietnamese studies (RR = 1.29; 95% CI 1.04-1.59). Sub-group analyses found that the magnitude of association tended to increase with greater degrees of exposure to Agent Orange, rated on intensity and duration of exposure and dioxin concentrations measured in affected populations.

CONCLUSION: Parental exposure to Agent Orange appears to be associated with an increased risk of birth defect.

As I side note in my link I am working on below you will find testimony in oversight in 2000 that clearly stated the maternal and paternal birth defect outcomes were almost identical. Yet, only the additional maternal birth defects were awarded but not associated to any herbicide only "Service in Vietnam". Would you not conclude this was pretty clever and cunning by the Department of Veterans Affairs??? Yet, the Ranch Hand Study in comparison was about herbicides and indicated and testified to under oath almost identical to the maternal study that awarded the additional presumptive Service Connection. Even at best this does not take a rocket scientists' to figure out what went on then and continues to go on.

I am currently working on a response to this Ford Foundation report. I really appreciate what they are doing, as we all should.

However, certainly they painted what was known and how the issues were politically motivated in a nicer way than it should have been. I would rather call it like it was and still is.

No sense in making it seem like our congress and our presidents did not know and still do not know what was and is going on.

My response, as I said in work now, will take approximately another week to two weeks to really finalize, edit, and get posted so you will know Congress and the Executive Branch knew and still did NOTHING.

My response will also include how the known flawed and corrupted studies influenced decisions and even denials by IOM and negative presentations by the CATO institute using and citing these bogus government studies that were command influenced, protocol violations time after time, and the facts were never reported. Even after the study scientists themselves concluded the data should be published. Congress would listen to these biased folks but not the stakeholders themselves. Nice touch on their behalf.

Once anyone looked at the protocols with any failure analysis background at all it was obvious the study was bogus and any statistical analysis tainted and I said so to the IOM back in 2003. Not till 2008 did the scientific truths come out. And still Congress does nothing!

Yet, scientists after scientists both government and non-government but "grant associated" testified using these bogus statistical numbers that were cited and published in order to deny Veterans/Widows/Offspring.

As I went through some of the CATO institute testimony I was taken back by not only the use of this bogus study in statistics but other statements on other dioxins such as 2,4-D that were not truthful nor did it even meet the common sense smell test.

I am calling this link "AO...and Congress did nothing!"

Remember it is only 1/3 complete with no editing yet but want you to see what I am working on and will present when finished with inclusions of the additional cancer data.

<http://www.2ndbattalion94thartillery.com/Chas/andCongress.htm>

Additional Cancer Bill

Also I received an E-mail from Congressman Kagen's Office on the AO cancer bill for the additional cancers for AO we had started back in the 109th Congress. Which; now seems to be, in my opinion only, nothing but a sham.

It seems the Veterans Groups got involved now and want to provide or seek more information. Here we had a bill going forward and now the Veterans Groups got involved and it is now treading water and up for the third time dying a slow death just as our affected Veterans are dying, are going uncompensated, non-service connected, and their widows will be uncompensated. Even though this office said I was the catalyst for the bill they never came back to me and said give us more data or we decided we needed more data. I do not know which Veterans Groups are involved in this delay but I think you can guess at least three of them.

I will include in the new link a separate portion the evidence of not only the cancers we wanted to cover in the bill but that "all site cancers" are associated no matter where they are located. That way you will know the information was provided to make the case and if nothing still happens...then you can only assume it was a re-election ploy by Congressman Kagen or your Veterans Groups got to the Congressman on behalf of the Executive Branch via DOD and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Now once this is posted I would expect or demand at least this office review the white paper and story board presentation and at least ask questions or at least come back with comments. If this does not happen then I would suggest Congressman Kagen needs to find work elsewhere.

It is time Congress measured Veterans Affairs Performance not by how many Veterans Affairs bonuses are given out for controlling the yearly budget by whatever means legal and illegal but by:

How many Veterans died waiting for their EARNED benefits on a yearly basis.

Why and How many times was the Veteran's claim denied by Veterans Affairs over a course of years or even decades and then overturned or remanded after years of stalling at Veterans Affairs Level as more Veterans died waiting. How many died during this stalling process.

What is the turn around time on presumptive disorders not for an approval or some bogus "oh we replied to the claim within 176.5 days" but getting the benefit actually in the hand of the Veteran or the now deceased Veteran for his or her family for their support for service connected death.

Last but not least of course Congress should answer the following.

Given the revelations over the years of corruption and illegal on-going activity by DoD/VA that goes unpunished but rewarded it seems; and the absolute judicial power Veterans Affairs has been awarded by Congress for an entire segment; outside the constitution with no separation of powers. Knowing that Veterans Affairs is biased and vengeful in its going after any Veteran or Widow that really speaks out...is it now illegal for Veterans to aggressively seek their EARNED BENEFITS. If it is now illegal what does Our Congress think the punishment should be?

- a) Evidence Time stamps illegally changed in order to reset the entire Veterans/Widows claim;
- b) Notes on evidence within the Veterans C-file, Do NOT show to the Veteran nor his representative;
- c) Shredding of evidence and claim files;
- d) Let the Veterans six year old VA remanded claim sit for at least another five years before anyone within Veterans Affairs or VA's DC Remand Center touches it as it sits there with a red ribbon on it saying do not touch;
- e) Evidence with "Destroy This" penciled in on it;
- f) Or how about VA Regional just telling the Veteran up front, "You will die before you receive any benefits from us";

g) Or how about even though we have approved 280 claims at BVA level and your case is exactly the same case only with a different name at the top because you spoke out; your claim is denied forever.

h) or ALL OF THE ABOVE

If all of the above, since Congress has given the judicial authority over Veterans to VA only, then the Supreme Court Marque must be changed to Justice for ALL with a caveat "except for, thanks to our elected officials in Congress, Veterans/Widows/Government Damaged Offspring of Veterans."

Congress I am sure would fund the addition of that caveat so at least everyone signing up with that blank check would know the constitutional ramifications and outcomes after they get out.

Yea, I know pretty cynical but I think it is past time some cynicism was incorporated instead of even trying to provide evidence that no one in Congress wants to see much less really look at. Also time for some new blood in our elected officials regardless of party affiliations.

In fact, one Veterans Organization is now looking for a law firm to file RICO charges against Veterans Affairs which will make just wonderful world wide publicity of how America and its elected officials actually treats its Veterans for their sacrifices in that world wide arena.

But as the old saying goes sometimes the truth will hurt; but it is still the TRUTH!

American Veterans have protected and saved many populations around the world from their government tyranny but who in Congress protects the American Veteran from our own governments form of Tyranny?

Not many apparently!

Best,

Kelley

"If you are able, save a place for them inside of you and save one backwards glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go. Be not ashamed to say you loved them, though you may or may not have always. Take what they have taught you with their dying and keep it with your own. And in that time when men decide to feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace those gentle heroes you left behind." Maj. O'Donnell

"About Vietnam...The tragedy, indeed the immorality of those years, was that for the first time in our history, our country and it's government failed to match the heroic sacrifices of our men in the field...This must never happen again."

--President Ronald Reagan

Agent Orange Victims & Widows Support Network
Home Of The Agent Orange Quilt Of Tears
<http://www.agentorangequiltotears.com/>
Sacrifice is meaningless without remembrance