

PESTICIDES

American and Australian bases were constantly sprayed with MALATHION (a highly toxic chemical) from fixed-wing aircraft. The purpose of the spraying was to kill mosquitoes. No attempt was made to cover the various water tanks around the Australian bases prior to spraying operations.

WHAT CHEMICALS DID AUSTRALIAN FORCES USE?

A report dated May, 1968, entitled "A Report of the Spraying of Herbicides at 1st Australian Task Force, Vietnam," lists the following:

2, 4-D	REGLONE	DIQUAT
BORATE-CHLORATE	GRAMOXONE	PARAQUAT
DISTILLATE-CREOSOTE	DIMETHYLSULPHOXIDE (DMSO)	TORDON
PICLORAM		AGRAL
BROMICIL		

Extracts from the report are startling, both from the point of view of the effects of the chemicals on humans and the cavalier nature of the spraying operation. For example:

"A total of 100 acres were sprayed ... during the developmental and INSTRUCTIONAL periods. Five acres were sprayed with a sterilant, or growth retardant chemical, and aerial spraying techniques were developed."

"The supply of the chemicals proved difficult, as the quantity needed was in one case greater than the annual requirement for Australia."

"It was found that the five ton GS truck used as a spraying vehicle was difficult to manoeuvre diagonally through the rubber plantation, and became bogged in wet areas. It was found that the truck tray twisted when obstacles such as paddy-bunds were crossed diagonally. The twisting of the chassis eventually sheared the bolts which were used to hold the tank down to the truck tray, and cracked the right front tank footing."

"One operator lifted a bucket by the handle, which broke free, allowing two gallons of chemical concentrate to saturate his clothing."