

4-14-74

6.

The Australian bureaucrats and politicians are following the American view that AGENT ORANGE and other chemicals used in Vietnam, especially 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T, are harmless.

A document in our possession, written by an American Veteran Affairs official, states:

"... AGENT BLUE has been clinically shown to be a human carcinogen ..." It states further:

"... There were two basic types of defoliants used in Vietnam; AGENT ORANGE and AGENT BLUE. They are mutagens and tetratogenic. This means that they intercept the genetic DNA message process to an unborn foetus, thereby resulting in deformed children being born." (Similar to the Thalidomide situation.)

Sooner or later this matter will have to be resolved honestly, equitably and finally. But how many veterans have to die before something is done?

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REPORT ON THREE SURVEYS CONDUCTED INTO THE HEALTH OF VIETNAM VETERANS

Three surveys have been carried out in the past 12 months into the health of Vietnam Veterans. The first, conducted by the No. 2 District Board of the R.S.L. (Vic.) was reported on in the July edition of this newsletter. We referred in that report to another survey and this plus the result of another carried out in the U.S. are reported as follows:

1. A survey was conducted by 2 social workers in May/June 1980 into the health of 135 Vietnam Veterans, 102 wives and the 225 children born to them since the Veteran returned to Australia. This survey found that 60% of the Veterans surveyed suffered from nervous disorders, 79% from skin disorders, 60% from stomach and bowel disorders, and 45% from chest and respiratory disorders. Of the wives surveyed, 13.2% reported at least one miscarriage, 10.2% reported having given birth to stillborn babies and 6.1% reported giving birth to malformed foetuses. (These babies all died.) Of the children still living, 144 of the 225 surveyed were found to be suffering from disabilities ranging from physically malformed 21.2%, respiratory disorders 21.3%, skin disorders 23.4%, and eyesight disorders 19.1%.