

2. In 1979 a survey was conducted in the U.S. by Dr. Gilbert Bogen of Highland Park, Illinois. He studied 78 Vietnam Veterans and their wives and reported his findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association Nov., 30, 1979, Vol. 242 No. 2, page 2391 as follows:

"85% of the men experienced a rash that was resistant to treatment -- Joint pain occurred in 71%, stiffness in 59% and swelling in 45%. Hypersomnolence occurred in 44% of the men and extreme fatigue in 80% -- Persistent neurological complaints were - tingling 55%, numbness 60%, dizziness 69%, headache 35% and autonomic dyscontrol 18%. Severe psychiatric manifestations were - depression 73%, suicidal attempts 8% and violent rages 45%. An inability to concentrate occurred in 17% and bouts of sudden lapses of memory were seen in 21%. Patients have described fearful episodes of suddenly not knowing where they were going; it was as if their thoughts had suddenly left them. There was also a loss of libido in 47%. Three patients died of cancer. Another 10% had been treated for cancer --"

Complaints related to the Gastro intestinal tract included anorexia (loss or deficiency of appetite for food) 41%, nausea 59%, vomiting 13%, hematemis (vomiting blood) 8%, diarrhoea 51%, constipation 31%, abdominal pain 24% -- Nineteen per cent of our group had children with gross birth defects. One or more miscarriages were experienced in 13% of the wives. There were reports of sterility; semen analysis showed low sperm counts and abnormal forms --"

This group of veterans has in general been chronically ill. Patients complained of frequent infections and allergies. The mean age of the group was 31.7 years. Both upper and lower socioeconomic levels were represented."

We believe that these surveys are very significant -- the problem we face is making the Government think the same way. We believe that the R.S.L. is conducting another survey on a National basis using the same questionnaire as was used by No. 2 District Board. It is regretted that the R.S.L. did not consult us before launching this project. We believe that you only get one crack at a good survey and to use the existing questionnaire will only allow broad assumptions to be made. A better questionnaire compiled with our help and that of our professional advisers could have produced a survey from which information could be drawn by all interested sections of the community.