

The number of veterans and their families whose lives have been devastated as a result of exposure to herbicides and pesticides in Vietnam is alarming. Make no mistake about this; the Agent Orange issue is far more serious than the Thalidomide case. The number of veterans exhibiting classical symptoms of chemical exposure is growing as they realise their health problems are not "just a coincidence."

At the moment, the issue we are facing creates more questions than there are answers. For instance, how does a veteran adequately articulate his particular health problem on a compensation claim document; or in an interview with a Government Medical Officer when he already feels speechless with anger and frustration, after years of living with a health problem that nobody would understand or even believe? And the wives - are they now to dismiss the irrational, emotional outbursts and try to live within a new set of rules? Will any amount of compensation adequately repay the trauma and heartache caused by unexplained deformities in the children?

Spare a thought for the problems faced by the Association's Executive. Of course members want action immediately, but how does a group of volunteers cope with the enormous task of collating the data needed to present a factual, well reasoned case and present it to the right authority at the right time? Who knows exactly how to deal with the ubiquitous but somewhat flippant and sceptical mass media in order to get the message across?

Furthermore, who decides what is chemical warfare and what is merely a defoliant or pesticide operation? Is the present Repatriation Act sufficient to finally deal with our case anyway? How long will it take to overcome bureaucratic red tape and adroit political buck-passing?

WHO CARES?

The Association does! One thing is absolutely certain: there is a case to answer and we will win this battle. What is needed from each member is patience and maximum support for the V.V.A.A. Attempt to pay dues where possible and actively recruit new members. Talk to your neighbours, friends and workmates who may not fully understand our position.

DAPSONE

Questions have been asked by DAPSONE was given to Australian troops in Vietnam and what side effects does the drug have.

Ted Warner

051-444764.

John Puntz

051-4486246.

Dr Osborne
makes him aware
he's a Viet Vet

is asking

oncologist

Brian to ring
Refer. to Dr Spec.

John Sullivan

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Dept Vets Affairs

