

Can you stand one more Agent Orange story...please bear with me as I tell you one of America's dirty little secrets.

We have now buried more veteran victims of Agent Orange than there are names on the Vietnam Wall.

HR 2254 is languishing in the House of Representatives with 245 co-sponsors. It will restore the benefits for the disrespected and disenfranchised veterans who served in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia & Guam...the United States Air Force Veterans who were in the air space above Vietnam and the United States Navy Veterans who served in the waters around Vietnam. We the widows join our beloved Veterans who are currently suffering the ravages of illness and disease due to the United States Government's decision to continue the use of the rainbow herbicides with full knowledge of the outcome in requesting...no, DEMANDING, that this bill come to the floor of the House of Representatives to once and for all deliver the respect and benefits to these unselfish men and women who are paying for said benefits with great pain and suffering and their very lives.

This bipartisan legislation will reap beneficiaries in all congressional and senatorial districts. It will ease the financial burden of the suffering veterans and their families as well as validate the widows.

We the widows have suffered the consequences of the exposure to Agent Orange for longer than you will ever know. Our husbands returned to this country with no government support system. We nurtured them through the anger, the nightmares, the lifelong stomach problems, the mood swings and the symptoms of what we now know to be agent orange related illnesses that caused their early departure from this earth leaving us to become young widows. We lost our husbands...too old to start over and too young for social security. We lost our loving husbands, our lifelong companions. Our children lost their fathers...and our young grandchildren will never experience that special love that only a grandfather can bestow.

Suddenly the young widow realizes the secondary losses...no more income, no health insurance, no couples social life, no one to have dinner with, no one to wrap their strong arms around us for comfort through life's miseries. He will never again walk in the door at the end of the day to put a smile on our weary faces. As we carry our burdens alone our government abandons us as they have abandoned our veteran husbands.

When our children were born with structural birth defects never heard of in the genealogy of our family we had no idea that Agent Orange was the cause. We suffered life's blows together without aid and assistance from the United States Government. It wasn't until several months after my husband's death that I literally tripped over a web site with a list of known birth defects caused by exposure to Agent Orange that I suddenly realized why we had that burden to carry when we were only 19 and 23 years old.

Because our husbands served our country in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict we are in this position. Our Vietnam Veterans who served outside of the country of Vietnam are required to prove "boots on the ground". Most of them did in fact have "boots on the ground"; however, when we file FOIA requests they continually come back stating "THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE DID NOT MAINTAIN THOSE

RECORDS". We, therefore, are being given an impossible task to prove "boots on the ground"...the single most asinine language to get past our elected officials.

My husband (like many others) left Travis Air force Base in California, traveled through Seattle, Washington, on to Alaska and in to Saigon. He was in Saigon for several days prior to his arrival in U-Tapao Thailand. He also flew in and out of Vietnam frequently. He was in Bien Hoa, Nha Trang, Phu Cat and other locations that I can't recall from stories that he would tell. Interestingly enough my FOIA request for his morning reports came back stating again that The United States Air Force did not maintain these records.

Why not?

In 2008 many months after my husband's death, I found the CHECO report on the internet. Agent Orange was used on virtually every air base in Thailand to quell vegetation growth.

The bases, including living quarters in Thailand were extensively sprayed with Malathion for mosquitoes due to the fear of malaria. Does Malathion also contain deadly dioxin? Did Malathion contribute to my husband's early death?

In 1999 the Thailand government found buried Agent Orange barrels when expanding the Bor Fai Airport so as to accommodate their growing tourism industry. Bor Fai is near Hua Hin, Cha Am, Pranburi District...where according to the DoD the United States Government tested Agent Orange in 1965. My husband has photos from Cha Am, Hua Hin where he visited while serving in Thailand in 1968. He ate the food, breathed the air and swam in the water...did this contribute to his death?

Why is HR 2254 introduced by Congressman Bob Filner (D) CA, with enough bipartisan co-sponsors to be an up and down bill just sitting there? Where is the outrage? Where is the press? Where's the justice?

Are we as a nation to sit back and allow our elected leaders to continue to wring their hands and shed crocodile tears over the needs and wants of ILLEGAL aliens while continuing to ignore the very men and women who unselfishly served this great nation in Southeast Asia at the convenience of the United States Government?

Please contact your Congressional representative to express your support for our Vietnam Veterans and their grieving widows. Demand action on HR 2254 now.

To all Veterans I thank you for your unselfish service to our great country...to all Veterans widows I send you my love and sincere condolences for your loss.