

The effect of agent orange on vietnam history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Actually the situations of the effects of Agent Orange on Vietnam fill with a lot of disagreement and uncertain result. There are unclear information about the exact amount of Agent Orange and other herbicides sprayed and exact location that the United States were used in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. However, there is limited information about the long term effects of Agent Orange on the environment and people of Vietnam. The unclear information and disagreement of the Agent Orange effects come from one main problem known as "Fog of war". When the herbicides were used, the US military were regardless about potential long term environmental and health effects of the widespread use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. As the same to the US, both the South Vietnamese and North Vietnamese governments deleted all the detail about the troop deployment in order to keep secret in war. As the result, current Vietnamese government has less clue of where to clean Agent Orange and dioxin. To have direct information about Agent Orange exposure is not available, nor the indirect information can be seek out. Soil sample were taken from location that has been suspected to test dioxin level. Not only to the soil but also blood and tissue samples can be taken from Vietnamese nationals over the country to test how much dioxin is present in their systems. Present day, few parts of these studies have been done and still continue to finish them all. However, the research of using Agent Orange and other herbicides in Vietnam and the resulting exposure of Vietnam people to dioxin is still in its limited, it can give a few tentative agreements from existing studies. First, there are many areas in southern Vietnam was sprayed with Agent Orange and other herbicides during the Vietnam War, with difference levels of dioxin. Second, millions of Vietnamese were directly exposed to dioxin at the time the

<https://assignbuster.com/the-effect-of-agent-orange-on-vietnam-history-essay/>

herbicides were sprayed during the Vietnam War, and millions more have been exposed to dioxin that remains in the soil and waterways of southern Vietnam until now. Third, blood and tissue studies of Vietnamese nationals results the higher than normal levels of dioxin in their systems that proof people have been exposed to Agent Orange, but methodological problems give difficult explanation of data in discussion. Forth, research in Vietnam on the long term health effects of exposure to changing levels of dioxin is limited, so it is difficult to establish certain conclusion about the concern between dioxin exposure and a changing of health problems that is happening among the Vietnamese people with unusually high frequency.

History of the Use of Agent Orange in Vietnam

During the Vietnam War, Agent Orange was chemical herbicides used from 1961 to 1971 by the U. S. military which cooperated with Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) to reduce military enemy cover in thick forest areas. We didn't know for sure why they call it " Agent Orange" but we knew that the Agent Orange were invented under Department of Defense (DOD) contracts for military use in Vietnam by several companies and Agent Orange was one of 15 herbicides used during the period of Vietnam War. However, Agent Orange was the most extensively used herbicide. Soon after the war, a research showed that remaining Agent Orange contamination levels ranging from 0. 05 to 17. 0 parts per million (p. p. m.).

Clean-up efforts

The process to the clean-up of the dioxin in Vietnam due to the spraying of the herbicide called Agent Orange from the United State during the Vietnam war is a bit complicate because of the vast area of spraying and time condition plus the resource support. Another school of thinking came up that the Vietnam annual heavy rain may wash away the dioxin from those spared area.

Moreover, due to the political factors that Vietnamese and the United State delay to consideration on the topic of cleaning up the dioxin from the some identified area such as the air base use by the Operation Ranch Hand due to the of the status of permanent normal trade relation (PNTR) in 2006 with the United States, the membership in the World Trade Organization in 2007. We can see clearly that after the obtained the permanent normal trade relation status and became the member of the World Trade Organization, Vietnamese government seem to take up the issue on cleaning-up the dioxin with the United State as bilateral relation. In The process of cleaning-up the dioxin started from the Da Nang air base with the cooperation between the Vietnamese Ministry of Defense, the U. S. Environment Protection Agency (EAP) and a group called the U. S. Vietnam Dialogue Group on Agent Orange (dioxin). In 2008, Vietnamese government estimated the cost of the clean-up process on Da Nang is about \$14 million. After that, the Vietnam dialogue group announced on February 1, 2008 that the first two stages of the cleaning the is around \$1. 2 million.

Vietnam's assistance to the victims

Estimation by Vietnam government showed that at least there are 2.1 to 4.8 million victims of Agent Orange exposure. The Vietnamese government through the provincial government agencies conducted a program in order to support people who have problem with medical condition related to Agent Orange exposure. On July 24, 1998 there is a fund established by the Vietnam Red Cross (VRC) so called the Agent Orange Victims Protection Fund. Moreover, there are also some other national organizations such as the Ho Chi Minh Youth Union, Vietnam Lawyers Association, Vietnam Woman's Association, Vietnam Association veterans, Confederation of Vietnam Labour Unions, and Vietnam Farmer Association contributed to central fund to provide support to the victims of Agent Orange exposure. Only the provincial level alone, there are staggering amounts of 57 Agent Orange Protection Fund. According to a source, from 1998 until 2004 the programs to provide aid to people who were exposed to dioxin (substance in Agent Orange) received 50 billion dong which equal to \$3.1 million from the provincial fund and 23 billion dong which is equal to \$1.4 million from the Vietnam Red Cross.

In 1999, there is a program created by the Vietnamese government in order to overcome the many different consequence of herbicides such as the Agent Orange which were used by the United State in the Vietnam War. They subjected to provide support to environmental remediation and health care to those people who experienced the diseases related to the Agent Orange exposure. With the association with committee 33, Vietnam's Ministry of Health create a program called the AO Central Payment program to provide support in form of cash to people who experienced the diseases related to

the Agent Orange exposure. The Vietnamese government categorized People who experienced the diseases related to the Agent Orange exposure were in 3 into three groups to receive disability stipend of up to \$20 per month or 300, 00 Vietnamese dong. They are:

People who not completely or completely lost the ability to work.

Children with deformities which a part or some part the body has not developed in the normal way or normal shape.

Orphans with deformities.

The estimation of Vietnamese government on the annual of providing the disabilities stipend in around \$20 per month to 2. 1 to 4. 8 million victims of Agent Orange exposure is about \$500 million to \$1. 2 billion. That was a staggering amount of cash to the Vietnamese government.

Implications for Bilateral Relations

Vietnam - U. S. relations become more important on the security trade and economic over in 10 years and it has gained high status over the long history of war issues in Vietnam. Even though a war legacy issues in the U. S. difficult and held up efforts to become normally friendly again after a period of dispute relations between the two countries, the perceived mutual benefits of bilateral trade currently bring more influence on overall U. S.- Vietnam relations. Nevertheless, there will be the risk that the direction of war legacy problem -such as the status of Vietnam's victims of Agent Orange-could weaken or delay further progress between the two countries.

It's very important for Vietnamese government to take care of the Vietnamese who suffered from the Orange Agent. After year of requesting for assistance clean up in Vietnam, the U. S. had provided and assistance in cleaning up dioxin to the illnesses. Within Vietnam, nevertheless, with the support of the medical conditions to the victims, there had been identified one million people in the country that got the support from the medicine but it's not equal to the number of the estimated has shown that 2. 1 million-4. 8 million people who were suffer from the Agent Orange. Much of that concern is focused on the physical problems of Vietnam's children who have medical conditions associated with direct or indirect exposure to dioxin. Some observers think the Vietnamese people's generally positive attitude about the United States could change for the worse if the U. S. government is perceived to be insensitive or intransigent about Agent Orange and its associated problems.

The past policy of the U. S. government seems to have been to ignore legal responsibility for health assistance. The U. S. has been unwilling to provide medical and money assistance to program specifically place at purported victims of Agent Orange. Despite, the new U. S policy, the government help to assist the victims and it might take several years before all of the major dioxin " hot spots" has been remediate. On the other hand, Vietnam is now very pay attention in negotiating a trade agreement (FTA) with the U. S. while they are now finding the acceptance into the U. S. generalized system of preference (GSP) program, which would remove tariffs on U. S. imports of selected goods from Vietnam. In additional, maybe because the growth of

China influence in Southeast Asia, Vietnam has been looking for its security relation with U. S.

It's likely to cause trouble or inconvenience for future military conflict between the two countries because there's concern in the U. S. if the United States government were to apparently accept some legal or moral responsibility for the Vietnamese " victims" of Agent Orange. In this view, for the U. S. government act seen as humanitarian and not an admission of culpability because of the U. S. government remains support to any assistance provide after effect of Agent Orange.