

DAMAGING EFFECTS OF AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN THE PAIN OF MANY COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES AND GENERATIONS

KHONG DIEN

I. OPERATION RANCH HAND

In the First World War (1914-1918), the German army used asphyxiant gas against French and British forces. In the first stage of the Second World War, the US studied toxic chemicals to destroy crops in Japan, however, under the Roosevelt Administration the US did not dare to use them. Under the Truman Administration, the US army intended to use chemical 2,4-D to destroy farms around 6 major cities of Japan, however the Japanese fascists surrendered so quickly that the plan to use it was not implemented. Yet, Agent Orange/dioxin continued to be studied by the United States for military purposes, regardless of international laws such as the Geneva Protocol and the Hague Convention (1).

To save the collapse of the Saigon Administration, in early 1960s, the United States applied a new theory called the “Special War” to replace the “unilateral war” which had gone bankrupt. They intensively prepared for the use of modern and dangerous weapons, including Agent Orange/dioxin. After taking power (on May 11, 1961) President John Kennedy declared: the United States decides to use herbicides and other modern technologies to control the situation in South Vietnam. On August 10, 1961, the US army started to spray toxic chemicals in South Vietnam by Fairchild C-123 and C-130 aircraft. On November 20, 1961 J. F. Kennedy officially ratified the operation of defoliation of farms and mountains in South Vietnam under the name “Operation Ranch Hand” (2).

The aim of the Operation Ranch Hand was to use herbicides and defoliants to turn many thick forest areas in South Vietnam into bare hills and the mangrove forest areas into bare marshland to wipe out bases of liberation army and guerrillas; destroy crops to cut food supplies of the revolutionary forces, at the same time to force people into concentration camps or into areas under the US-puppet control (3).

However, with the “special war”, the US-puppet forces could not save their continuous defeats in the South Vietnam battlefields. Under the Lyndon Johnson Administration, the US shifted over to the “local war”. The chemical warfare was thus escalated under the plan “Pink Rose”. At the end of 1965, they started chemical sprayings over the Ho Chi Minh Trail and southern Laos. In 1966 — 1967, they sprayed chemicals on the demilitarized zone along the 17th Parallel. It was a follow-up act of gross violation, regardless of international laws. Also in 1967, the US Defense Department declared to intensify the use of herbicides in South Vietnam and push the Operation Ranch Hand to its peak. If at the beginning, only 6 aircraft were used in chemical sprayings, the number of aircraft in this period rose to 20; and if in the 1961-1965 period, only one airport — Tan San Nhat Airport served this operation, by this period two other airports — Da Nang and Bien Hoa also had chemical facilities built to serve the Operation Ranch Hand.

Between 1961 and 1971 (3,735 days), under the Operation Ranch Hand, the US army sprayed a large amount of toxic chemicals in South

Vietnam. According to a study by a group of researchers from the University of Columbia, USA, headed by J. M. Stellman published in "The extent and patterns of usage of Agent Orange and other herbicides on Vietnam", the amount of chemicals used by the US in Vietnam is 76.9 million liters, including 64% of dioxin. Recently, also according to those scientists, published in the US Nature Magazine, No. 42 dated July 17, 2003, the figure is 100 million liters.

So, the Operation Ranch Hand, with some 100 million liters of toxic chemicals (the figure known until today) used by the US army in South Vietnam, shows that it was the largest chemical warfare in the history of world wars so far. Agent Orange/dioxin have not only damaged the natural environment such as soil, water, fauna and flora in the mountainous areas, rice fields and rural villages in South Vietnam but also human health, weakening the health of many people who lived in the sprayed areas and those who have been exposed to the chemicals. In particular, their painful consequences have been left on many communities, ethnic groups, families and generations of Vietnamese as well as many American, Australian, New Zealand and South Korean veterans who took part in the Vietnam war and their families and children.

II. IMPACTS OF AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN ON ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM

In the war of aggression against Vietnam, the US army used many types of toxic chemicals, but dioxin is most poisonous and dangerous. It is estimated that only 85 grams of dioxin can kill the whole population of a large city of New York size (nearly 8 million people). Yet in this war, as mentioned earlier, the US sprayed in South Vietnam 100 million liters of chemicals, most of them contain extremely poisonous dioxin. Obviously, this is a crime of genocide of the environment and humans. As US Senator Nelson

once stated (August.1970): "Never before in human history, a country had declared war to the living environment of another nation, but the United States has rushed into an experiment no one dared to do before" (4).

In 1970s, the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal considered the US war a genocidal war against the ecological environment and humans in Vietnam. According to statistics released by Hatfield Consultants Ltd. Canada, the area sprayed by toxic chemicals in South Vietnam is 1.6 million ha; according to a report of the US Defense Department, it is 2.6 million ha; but the statistics of the Institute of Forest Investigation and Planning (Vietnam) show that the sprayed area is 3.1 million ha. Most of the four tactical regions in South Vietnam, from the 17th Parallel downwards, have been sprayed with the concentration of about 8 gallon/1ha, which is 25 times more than suggested by producers. Of which, the tactical region 3 was sprayed most, with more than 4 million gallons, such as Cu Chi 140,000 gallons, Bien Hoa over 163,000 gallons etc. In the Operation Ranch Hand, up to 10 provinces have been repeatedly sprayed, causing serious consequences to the environment such as Phuoc Long (704 spraying missions), Thua Thien (606 missions), Binh Dinh (558 missions), Long Khanh (502 missions), Tay Ninh (473 missions), Quang Nam (377 missions), Bien Hoa (366 missions), Binh Duong (357 missions), Quang Tri (347 missions) and Kon Tum (311 missions). These 10 provinces account for 47% of the total amount of chemicals sprayed by the US army in South Vietnam (Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung). In some places the concentration of sprayings was too great that they have been called "Agent Orange Valley" by the people in Quang Tri Province. These places are in some communes in Cam Lo district, Quang Tri Province, in particular Cam Chinh Commune where the concentration of dioxin in human body, soil and water sources is 14 to 20 times higher than DPT. According to surveys of the University of Kanazawa (Japan) and Department

1080 of the Vietnam Ministry of Health, at Khe Ram area in this commune, any sample of soil, water, mud and animal fat gives the concentration of dioxin 14 times higher and some persons have the concentration of dioxin 20 times higher than DPT (5). In the mountain district of A Luoi, in Thua Thien — Hue Province, where most of the population are from different ethnic minority groups (such as Ta Oi, Pako and Pa Hy) Ktu and Bru-Van Kieu, according to studies, during the war, the amount of chemicals sprayed by the US here is not less than in any other places in Vietnam . Along Highway 49 to A Luoi, no forests exist. Thirty years after the war ended, trees cannot grow and only a few tree stumps burnt by toxic chemicals are seen (Nguyen Thi Thu Huong). However, according to Mr. Vu Van Xuan, permanent Vice Chairman of the Dong Nai Provincial Red Cross, who, during discussion with us (on Sept. 26, 2005) said that, with the calculation of American scientists, in the surrounding areas of Bien Hoa Airport, the concentration of dioxin is highest compared to other areas in Vietnam. The victims in this area whom we had a chance to meet said that water of Bien Hung Lake receives from Bien Hoa Airport Lake is highly poisonous. Among those who have been exposed to the water source from the lake, many suffered from cancer or degrading health and also birth defects. According to Mr. Phong from Trung Dung Ward, Bien Hoa City, all fish and shrimps in Bien Hung Lake died because of dioxin contamination. Since 2000 - 2001, waste water from the airport lake has no longer been discharged into the lake but into another lake for treatment of poisonous substances. However, the water in Bien Hung Lake is still contaminated and the fish here has big head and small body and some of them are deformed and look very strange. The lake has been improved by changing the water and removing the surface layer of its bed. The soil dug up is as white as cement and no plant can live on that soil. At present, the lake still gives a very bad smell.

Obviously, the damaging effects of dioxin did not stop at defoliating forests during the 1960s and 1970s, but the substance has infiltrated deep underground and water sources in the sprayed areas. For example, at Ba (Goddess) Mountain area in Phu Cat District, Binh Dinh Province where forests were thick in the past, now trees cannot grow. The lake areas around the mountain have been contaminated by dioxin. In Tay Ninh Province, due to chemical sprayings, soil became exhausted and many areas have become waste land and bare hills. In Ca Mau where mangrove forests covered 82% of the province's area, after the sprayings, only 50% remained (6).

So, the sprayings of Agent Orange/dioxin in South Vietnam not only resulted in the loss of millions of hectares of forests and rice fields but also fauna and flora and ecological imbalance, leading to soil erosion, drought, flood and contaminated water sources. So far, many areas are still affected by dioxin which has infiltrated deep into the soil and underground water sources, making many animal and plant species either die or very slow in recovery. The contamination level in the underground soil in many places is 180 times higher than the safe level (7).

III. IMPACTS OF AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN ON COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES AND DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

According to a report of the US Defense Department, 25,585 villages and hamlets in South Vietnam have been sprayed, of them 3,181 have been directly affected with a population from 2.1 to 4.8 million people. Also according to American researchers, nearly 90% of the villages have been sprayed twice and some 11 villages have been sprayed 10 times (9).

About 5 million people in Vietnam are victims of Agent Orange/dioxin. Most of them are in the central provinces from Quang Tri

down to Dong Nai and in the Central Highlands. Of the victims, there are the Kinh (most of them) and ethnic minorities.

In Quang Tri province alone, according to a report from the Department of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs in 2004, 14,000 people in the province are affected by Agent Orange, many of them are ethnic minorities. In the three communes of Cam Chinh, Cam Nghia and Cam Tuyen in Cam Lo District, 855 persons are affected (10). In the two provinces of Gia Lai and Kon Tum, in the northern part of the Central Highlands, according to local reports, there are more than 12,000 victims each.

In A Luoi District, Thua Thien-Hue Province, through the first screening, 5,000 people in this district are affected by Agent Orange. The level of poison was so high that in 1968, no children were born in this district. All pregnant women suffered miscarriages and thousands of adults have died young because of being affected by Agent Orange. At present, hundreds of children are living with disabilities of all types, many of them have been born deaf, dumb or without anus, faces or limbs (Nguyen Thi Thu Huong).

In Phu Yen Province, according to surveys of functional agencies and the Provincial Museum (data provided by Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Hoa, a staff of Phu Yen Museum), 1,400 persons are affected by Agent Orange, of which ethnic minority people account for a large proportion. For example in Dong Xuan district: all of the 22 affected people in Phu Mo Commune are from the Banah and Cham ethnic minority groups (the Hroi group); and 33 of the 85 affected people in Xuan Phuoc Commune are Cham and 3 are Banah. In Song Hinh District: all of the 9 affected people in Ea Ba Commune are from the Ede ethnic minority group and 11 affected people in Ea Lam Commune are Ede. In Son Hoa District: All of the 41 affected people in Suoi Trai Comune are Ede and 42 affected people in Ea Cha Rang Commune are also Ede. Of the 130 affected people in Ca Lui Commune, 123 are

Cham and of the 120 affected people in Son Hoi Commune, 84 (70%) are Cham.

Not only people who lived in rural and mountain areas have been affected by this dangerous chemical but also those who live in major cities such as Da Nang, Bien Hoa, Can Tho, where there were storages of Agent Orange/dioxin are also affected. According to statistics from the Fund in Support of Agent Orange Victims under the Association of Agent Orange Victims in Da Nang City in 2005, the number of Agent Orange victims in this city is now 7,261 persons, including 4,103 males, 3,168 females and 1,445 children.

Agent Orange/dioxin victims in Vietnam are not only from the Kinh but also ethnic minority groups as mentioned above. They are not only those who were from the revolutionary armed forces but also civilians and personnel of the former Saigon puppet army and administration. Also according to a report of the Da Nang Fund in Support of Agent Orange Victims, among the victims, 2,485 persons joined the revolutionary forces, 3,703 are civilians and 635 personnel of the former Saigon puppet armed forces.

Agent Orange/dioxin victims are not only in southern provinces and cities but also in all northern provinces and cities; not only in the sprayed areas but also belong to the second and third generations and possibly many generations to come. For example in the Red River Delta province of Thai Binh, of the 27,934 people affected by Agent Orange/dioxin, 17,662 were directly affected in the battlefields in South Vietnam, 8,047 are from the second generation (their children) and 533 are from the third generation (their grandchildren). Most of the people who are affected by Agent Orange which has been passed on them by their parents can neither marry nor have children. Some affected people are more lucky as they are not deformed or have little defect shown on their appearance, thus can marry, but their fragile hope to have healthy children is replaced by despair. In the

capital city of Hanoi, although the war has passed for more than 30 years, its consequences are heavy and devastating. We can witness them in some special villages caring for children with disabilities such as the Hoa Binh (Peace) Village which is caring for children — victims of Agent Orange. The post-war wounds can be seen on the faces of deformed children and children with disabilities (11). As Mr. Wells-Dang, Representative of the Fund for Reconciliation Development (FRD) put it: Bombs and land mines can only affect several hundred people, but Agent Orange/dioxin affect many communities, many generations and up to 4-5 million Vietnamese are victims.

It's unfortunate that not only the Vietnamese people suffer from the damaging effects of this deadly substance, but also those who brought in bombs and toxic chemicals to harm others are affected. A study of more than 989 American war veterans who took part in Agent Orange sprayings in Vietnam, the rate of contracting cancer is 3.7 times more than other war veterans. US Naval Admiral Zumwelt, who ordered the spraying of Agent Orange in Vietnam has a son — a lieutenant who died of cancer caused by dioxin after returning from the war in Vietnam. His grandchild is also affected by his father. The child is blind and mentally retarded. Mr. Hank Emery has to fight with his heart disease for many years now since he left Vietnam. He said: We don't have much time as we are dying slowly. Imagine you see your grandchild newly born without eyes. It is a life-sentence for its mother and the baby itself.

Of the 3,200 New Zealanders who served the war in Vietnam, 2,500 are still alive, but suffer from several diseases such as vertebra cracks, blindness etc. Their children and grandchildren suffer from damaging heart and lung functions, twisted spinal column, uterus infection, asthma, and brain blood vessel disorder. For war veteran John Jenning, because of his exposure to this toxic chemical, he experiences rash and itchy on his body and his left eye is blind. His daughter

suffers from many diseases. She has her heart and lung transplanted and has to breathe oxygen 16 hours a day and is sterile. After investigation for a year and a half, the Health Committee of the New Zealand Parliament came into a conclusion that Agent Orange has damaged the health of veterans who took part in the Vietnam War and the Government had to admit this fact. According to another survey, nearly half of the Vietnam War veterans die at the age of 51 on an average.

According to a former study, about 5,000 South Korean (Republic of Korea) military personnel died in the war in South Vietnam, more than one time of this figure were injured and more than 10 times of this figure are affected by Agent Orange.

Mr. Mai Giang Vu, a soldier of the former Saigon Puppet Army, was involved in chemical sprayings under the Operation Ranch Hand, and had to be demobilized because one of his eyes was lost. His pain and hatred of war drags on with him when his three sons have left him forever because of the damaging effects of Agent Orange/dioxin.

The soldiers on the other side of the frontline in the war have not only been hunted mentally for the crimes they committed against their people during the war but also suffer physical pain, cancers and skin diseases. They also have to witness the pain suffered by their children and grandchildren such as birth defects, down syndrome and prostate cancer (12).

On the lives of the victims of Agent Orange in Vietnam, as covered by the media, there are hundreds of thousands of stories about them. Here are a few cases whom we have interviewed and talked to in their localities (13) to help you understand and share with their sufferings and to add to voices calling on people of conscience, the US government, army and chemical companies which produced Agent Orange/dioxin to be responsible for these victims, for their human rights and justice.

1. Mrs. Vo Thi Hong's family. Both Mrs. Hong and her husband were born and grown up in the province of Quang Nam which was sprayed by Agent Orange on many occasions. After nearly 30 years living there, they moved to Ham Tan, Binh Thuan Province. They have a son (Nguyen Thanh Duy, born in 1984) with mental retardation who often wanders around and cannot speak clearly; and a daughter (Nguyen Thu Thanh Thao) born in 1993 who is dumb and suffers from mental disorder. Both of their children cannot feed themselves or care for their own hygiene. Their mother has to do everything for them. Talking about her children's future, Mrs. Hong said: "If they can die before me, they will be happy, but if I die before them, they will have no one to rely on and lead an unsecured life" (14).

In the current Vietnamese society, there remains a conception: Children dying before their parents mean appropriating the fruit of parents' labour and the family is considered immoral. There is a saying among the Viet (Kinh):

*Yellow leaves are still on trees
Green leaves fall on the ground, do you know
it, God!*

But in this case, Mrs. Hong wants her children to die before her so that they will be "happy". It is really heart-renting for the mother.

2. Mrs. Ho Thi Nga is from the Co ethnic minority group in Tra Xuan Commune, Tra Bong District, Quang Ngai province. Both she and her husband were once wet by toxic chemical spraying. In 1983 she gave birth to a baby girl with squint eyes, a distorted mouth and one leg longer than the other. The girl often suffers fits of convulsions and so she screams and damages things. Her husband has left her to remarry another woman, but all of his children with the new wife suffer from birth defects. Mrs. Nga stays single to care for her daughter. Some men loved her and wanted to remarry her, but she

could not dare to think of her own happiness (15). So she sacrificed her youth and her own happiness for her only daughter with disability and will not know what her life will be.

3. Agent Orange has left unhappiness on the family of Mr. Tran Dao Ngoc and Mrs. Nguyen Thi Nhung in Quynh Coi District Town, Thai Binh Province. For 16 years now, they have to chain their son's legs. Their eldest son — Tan was born in 1981. Since he was small, whenever he falls into an epileptic fit, he screams, froths and damages everything around him. Sometimes he left home. That's why they have to chain his legs since he was 10 years of age. He then turns to tear mats and blankets and bites himself. His ten fingertips are damaged and his two arms are full of scars left by the injuries of his teeth.

Their second child died at the age of more than one because of its deformity with a big head and soft limbs. Their third child was born in 1983 also suffers from epilepsy. And their last two daughters are mentally retarded and have many darkened warts on their chest and one vertebra is distorted, thus making them have chronic back ache.

They will have to burden their 4 children with disabilities until their last breath (16).

4. Mr. Nguyen Viet Dang was born in 1927. Before he joined the army, he already had two healthy children. But his other two children — a daughter named Nguyen Thi Linh and a son named Nguyen Viet Dinh, born after he returned from the battlefields in South Vietnam are affected by Agent Orange with mental retardation. Nguyen Thi Linh, after getting married, gave birth to a child that died premature and her second child is living with disability. Mr. Dinh's eldest daughter is normal, but his second child has a flat skull and suffers from epilepsy. He is unable to perceive and whenever he falls into epileptic fits, he damages everything. So, Agent Orange affects the third generation (17).

5. Mrs. Kan Lay, of Ta Oi ethnic minority group in A Ngo commune, A Luoi District, Thua Thien — Hue Province gave birth to a snake-shaped child, without limbs, with only head and face. When the child was born, the whole village was shocked. Some villagers were so frightened that they left the village for many days. The baby only lived for two hours and died. Mrs. Kan Lay recalled: After the first birth, I had another three pregnancies but experienced miscarriages. Until my fourth pregnancy, (in 1991), I gave birth to a boy named Bac. However all his body is paralytic and lies on bed with his limbs rolled up. Since then she cannot be far from her pity son (18).

6. The family of Mr. Truong Huu Sa, 44 and Mrs. Nguyen Quynh Ly, 42 is from Da Nang City. In 1991, they gave birth to a boy named Truong Huu Lam who was born normal. Three days after birth, the baby fell unconscious and was hospitalized and was said to suffer from cerebral palsy. Until now (2005), the boy only lies in bed, with limbs rolled up and has to be attended by someone, if not he screams. It's hard to feed him and he takes drugs all the time. Talking with us, Mr. Sa said: "We cannot complain to any one. Whenever I go to Church (his family follows Catholicism) I pray for my son to be recovered from illness." Asked about the support and assistance given by the religious organization, he said: "no material support is given, but spiritually, they sympathize, share and encourage us very much, that's why our family is more confident".

7. Mr. Dang Bua, 40, is from Hoa Cuong Commune, Hai Chau District, Da Nang City, but worked in the Central Highlands for several years. In 1987 he married and a year later had a baby girl named Dang Thi No. No was born with two crossing legs. She can only lie in bed now, with her limbs rolled up and does not know anything. She cries all nights. When she was five years old, her mother left home to remarry another man. In the past, Mr. Bua earned his living by repairing bicycles. But he has to give

up his work for several years now to stay at home to care for his daughter. They are now living on the child's allowance. He has to do everything for his daughter, helping her relieve herself and urinate and serving her during her monthly period. She is 18 years old now, but he has to lie hugging her every night, if not she screams, thus affecting neighbours. Asked whether he intends to remarry, he replied: no. He said that he fears another woman may not stand his family circumstances or love his daughter and so will leave him again. He added that although he is only 44, he has no sexual desire for being so much worried for his daughter day and night.

Listening to him reminds me of the story "Half Man, Half Woman" by Zhang Tsien Liang, a Chinese author which I already read. The story is about a young man, who, in the period of Cultural Revolution, was given a disciplinary punishment because of love, but finally he could marry the one he loved. During the process of the Cultural Revolution, being denounced publicly too much that he lost his sexual desire, and so, at night, lying by the side of his wife, he could not have sex and is incapable to be a husband. In this case, Mr. Bua is unable to have sexual desire because of the suffering caused by Agent Orange.

8. Mrs. Nguyen Bi Binh, 71, is from Hoa Cuong Ward, Hai Chau District, Da Nang City. Her husband served the former Saigon puppet army in a logistic unit. Since 1968, he served in the areas sprayed by toxic chemicals. And since then, all her children have been born with defects. Her daughter - Thiet was born in late 1968. She is mentally retarded and suffers fits of convulsions from time to time and can only crawl, not walk. Her second daughter - Phuoc born in 1970 is like her sister, with mental retardation and cannot walk. Sometimes she can speak a few words, sometimes not. When she is asked, she only smiles. Her son Tam, born in 1975, is now in the same situation as his two sisters, but he can walk with difficulty and speak,

but not clearly. Mrs. Binh's husband had suffered long illness and died in 1994. She has to earn a living by selling candies and cakes at home to feed her three children with disabilities. Talking with us, she said: "I am old now and my health is not good. I don't know how my children will be when I die? One, I have to ask the Vietnamese Government for help, second, I want our State to ask the US Government to help us, who have once served them, so that my children can live on when I pass away. Our life is really hard, but I have no heart to leave them.

9. Mr. Dinh Van Thuong, born in 1927 (he was 78 in 2005) is from Truong Thanh Commune, Co Do District, Can Tho Province. Before 1961, when he was not yet affected by Agent Orange, he and his wife already had 6 children. They are all healthy and are married now. From 1963 to 1973, his wife gave birth to another four children, but they all died after birth. Until 1975 they gave birth to a son — Dinh Cong Tai who suffers from cerebral palsy and has to be attended to day and night. His wife died in 2004. He should have had rest and be served by his children and grandchildren like other old men, but on the contrary, he has to prepare meals, and care for his son with disability. He said: It's extremely miserable. Do those who have caused the disasters know our sufferings?

10. Mr. Nguyen Thanh Phuong was born in 1947, in Dong Thap Province. After 1975 he moved to resettle in Thanh Quoi Commune, Vinh Thanh District, Can Tho Province because there was more land here. He was affected by toxic chemicals in 1970-1971 when he earned his living by collecting rush in Dong Thap Province to make mats. He and his wife have four children, but three of them are living with disabilities. Their eldest son, Nguyen Thanh Tai, was born 1972 normal, but when he was 10-11 years old, he started to walk with difficulty and later on he could not walk anymore. One or two years later, he could not even sit, only lies and seems to be boneless. Another son, Nguyen

Thanh Thai was born in 1977 healthy and normal. But at the age of 9, he could not walk and at the age of 10 he could only lie in bed and his health condition is similar to his brother. Another son, Nguyen Thanh Loc, born in 1985, is like his two brothers. At the age of 8 he was paralytic, at first he could crawl to the toilet, but now he must be supported by someone. Due to having to care for three children with disabilities, the family has to sell all land, even their house. At present, they have to do all types of jobs as hired labourers to earn their living and are dependent on the allowances given to the three children with disabilities. The house they are living in is a charity house given by the local administration and people. Even though the local people sympathize with their family circumstances, but cannot give support to and help them all the time. In his talk with us, Mr. Phuong said: "It's so hard! We have to leave our lives to our fates. If we die, our three children will follow us, but whether they can die in good conditions. At night, we keep thinking, but we don't know what to do."

From the cases mentioned above, it is shown that although the war has ended for 30 years and chemical sprayings stopped since 1971, that is 35 years now, pain and sufferings remain. The consequences and damaging effects of Agent Orange/dioxin do not spare anyone, whether they are Americans, New Zealanders, Australians, South Koreans or Vietnamese; whether they are Kinh or Ta Oi, Bru-Van Kieu, Co, Cham or Ede; whether they are from the Revolutionary forces, civilians, or from the former Saigon army; and regardless of religion, if they are exposed to the chemical, they are affected and suffer similar physical pain. Therefore, we call on the US government and chemical companies that produced this deadly poison to be responsible for all the victims, not only those who sowed sufferings but more importantly those who suffer the wounds caused by them.

We call on people of conscience, for justice, love and human rights, to contribute their voices,

support victims of Agent Orange/dioxin in the Vietnam War and help them overcome or relieve partly their extreme sufferings.

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