

During the Vietnam War we, the members of the 8th TFW, Ubon Thailand, served our country voluntarily and unconditionally accepted the conditions of conventional combat without concern for our own personal safety. We trusted our government to do its part in protecting us from unnecessary hazards. However, we were secretly betrayed and exposed to the toxic herbicide Agent Orange (AO). Even after our military brothers began to suffer serious illnesses and started dying at an early age, that secrecy was maintained. It was decades later that the appalling secret was finally exposed, forcing our government to admit that those who served in Vietnam were subjected to a potentially toxic agent. During that same period an unprecedented number of veterans who served in Thailand were succumbing to the same illnesses. Nevertheless, Thailand Veteran's claims were denied based on our government's allegation AO was not used there. As the illness rate mounted, the Government eventually relented and accepted Thailand claims, but only from Thailand based Security Police forces (SPs). This was based on the acknowledgement AO was indeed used along Thailand base perimeters where the SP's spent most of their time. That confession ignored a critical factor. The majority of the Ubon military population was housed in open-air barracks and in many instances spent their working hours closer than 50 feet of those very same perimeters as well as other AO treated areas.

AO was applied by contracted Thai Nationals using high pressure spray apparatuses. The defoliant was repeated often enough to result in base-wide areas of barren terrain -- even in a tropical environment. Those spray applications had a mist carry range of over 500 meters. Frequent traffic on the adjacent perimeter dirt roads and jet engine exhaust/prop wash from aircraft created a potentially constant airborne contamination. Torrential monsoons added to the AO propagation through heavy rain runoffs.

It is common knowledge by all who served at the several military installations in Thailand, that constant eradication of foliage on and around those installations was accomplished by frequent defoliant treatments. Our Ubon brothers who suffer from several forms of the AO related illnesses continue to be denied claims that should have led to medical interventions long ago. Not only are Vets being denied claims, but due to lost records and poor VA filing practices, it is routine for the VA to require veterans to repeatedly re-file with fruitless results. Such ineffectual behaviors deliberate or otherwise should be investigated. It goes without saying, if such unethical treatment of our military men and women continues, it will surely deter their heroic spirit of voluntarily offering their lives for a country that forgets them as soon as the conflict has ended.

We the undersigned brothers/family members of the 8th TFW, Ubon Wolf Pack, implore your attention and resolution to a serious and unethical situation that has been perpetuated far too long.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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