

FACT SHEET – SUPPORT OUR TROOPS AND OUR VETERANS

Military Troops Demographics:

- Recruitment of Minorities. "When the government says we have to stay in Iraq, we have to show that we're prepared to lose lives, the 'we' should be a broad cross-section of America. They're not asking all of America: They've targeted those Americans who are not getting a fair shake in our society." -- *Rep. Charles Rangel*
- Unemployment rates for black youth are twice the rates for whites.
- African Americans and Hispanics are consistently overrepresented in the armed forces

What We Know:

- In Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, military personnel were unknowingly exposed to residual radiation during tasks of demolition, clean-up, and rescue of POWs in full ignorance of what that might mean.
- During Atmospheric Nuclear Weapons Testing in Operation Crossroads in 1946, participants were specifically told they had nothing to fear
- Radiation hazards are inherent in the nuclear weapons program, including nuclear submarines.
- Between 1962 and 1971, the U.S. sprayed 19 million gallons of herbicides (55% was Agent Orange over Vietnam to destroy jungle cover for the enemy.
- The government has finally recognized a host of diseases including cancer of the lung, larynx, and trachea and adult onset diabetes associated with Agent Orange entitling veterans to disability benefits. – *CBS News*.

What We Might Not Know:

- The number of GIs in Iraq with severe wounds is much larger than that represented to the public.
- GIs will come back suffering from the emotional wounds of war trauma.
- GIs will return sick from the use of Depleted Uranium munitions and other deadly military toxins found on today's battlefields.

Harm's Way:

- Servicemen are currently exposed to ionizing radiation while handling, storing and transporting of nuclear weapons (as guards, transportation specialists, weapons assembly teams and technicians).
- The Pentagon continues to use several toxic substances such as depleted uranium, anthrax vaccine, PB pills (nerve agent antidote), and pesticides despite growing evidence that they may explain the epidemic of health problems among Gulf War-One vets.
- Depleted uranium currently used in munitions in the Gulf War is considered very low level radiation, but becomes toxic when the weapons explode.

Supporting Our Troops??

- The Pentagon does not want to give the dangerous duty pay voted for by Congress
- The military refuses to comply with portions of the Force Health Protection Act adopted by Congress requiring them to conduct pre- and post- deployment medical exams so that GIs' medical condition can be evaluated in a timely fashion.
- "It is the grossest hypocrisy to wave yellow ribbons and say you 'support the troops', then cynically cut the very hospitals that the wounded and disabled will need. It is betrayal..." -- *David Cline, president, Veterans for Peace*.

Resources:

Veterans for Peace: http://www.veteransforpeace.org/Statement_by_David_091603.htm

Citizen Soldier: On depleted uranium weapons. <http://citizen-soldier.org/CS09-uranium.html>

International Action Center: A statement on the connection between agent orange and depleted uranium.

<http://www.iacenter.org/orangedu.htm>

National Gulf War Resource Center: For current data on the scientific and political issues surrounding mistreatment of Gulf War One veterans by the Pentagon and the VA. <http://www.ngwrc.org>

American Legion "I am not a number" Campaign: <http://www.veterans.legion.org/commander.htm>

Vietnam Veterans of Florida: Information on benefits for Veterans exposed to agent orange. <http://vvof.org/vvofaopg.htm>

VA's web site on Agent Orange: <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/benefits/Herbicide/index.htm>

CBS News: Agent Orange compensation still being fought in the courts, April 2002 article.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/04/02/health/main505150.shtml>