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JUL 27 1978
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Some editions of yesterday's Daily News reported that Vietnam veteran Paul Reutershan, a cancer victim, is seeking \$10 million damage from three chemical companies which he charges manufactured a defoliant he believes caused his illness. Two of the firms were erroneously identified as the Hercules Chemical Co. and the Shamrock Chemicals Corp.

DAILY NEWS, WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 1978

25

Dying Viet Vet Declares Chemical Warfare

By JOHN HAMILL and MICHAEL DALY

Dying from a cancer he believes was caused by exposure to a military defoliant called Agent Orange, a Vietnam veteran is seeking \$10 million in damages from three chemical companies that manufactured the poison.

As abdominal cancer spreads from his colon to his liver, 28-year-old Paul Reutershan of Stamford, Conn., has set in motion a \$10 million suit in New York Supreme Court against Dow Chemical Co., the Hercules Chemical Co. and the Shamrock Chemicals Corp. Each company, Reutershan's suit charges, "knew of the properties that would cause cancer before selling it for military use."

At the same time, Reutershan has formed Agent Orange Victims International, a group dedicated to locating, counseling and assisting other veterans who were exposed to the herbicide.

Between 1962 and 1970, the armed forces sprayed

more than 100 million pounds of Agent Orange on the Vietnamese countryside, hoping to "deprive the enemy of cover and food supplies." As an Army helicopter crew chief from 1965 to 1969, Reutershan flew through "huge clouds of the stuff."

The first tendrils of cancer may have been working their way into Reutershan's insides when, in 1970, the Army discontinued the use of Agent Orange. Researchers have found that the herbicide contained "hazardous concentrations" of tetrachloro-dibenzoparadoxin, also known as dioxin.

He Knows the Symptoms

Since then, scientists at Dow have contended that dioxin was "not present in sufficient amounts to constitute a danger." Other scientists, however, have ruled that any concentration of dioxin higher than five parts per trillion is "extremely carcinogenic."

Following news reports of his plight, Reutershan has received calls from more than 120 New York area veterans who complained of similar symptoms. Two veterans consulted a doctor and were told they had

cancer. One of these men served at the same time and in the same area of Vietnam as Reutershan did.

"I'm helping these guys out and that's all I care about," Reutershan said yesterday from his bed in Norwalk Hospital in Connecticut. "I'm not doing this for me. My time is up."

Carrying his fight to the White House, Reutershan recently wrote a letter to President Carter.

"I am a veteran of Vietnam," the letter began. "I joined the service when I was 17 ... believing this was to fulfill my obligation as a good citizen." Then Reutershan wrote that he was dying of a cancer caused by Agent Orange.

"Vietnam vets have been forgotten," Reutershan concluded. "And until we are remembered, the nightmare will not go away."

More than a month later, Reutershan received a letter from Carter aide Landon Kite: "President Carter has asked me to respond to your message and convey his thanks. You can be assured that careful consideration is given to all suggestions from those who share his concern for the well-being of the nation."

no 12 mil gallons

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