



*Vietnam activist Wilfred Gluud speaks in front of Christiansborg in Copenhagen, seat of the Danish Parliament. Photo Hans Van Dam.*

## ***Monsanto and Agent Orange***

"March against Monsanto" in Copenhagen, Denmark, was held on Saturday, May 25th in front of the Danish Parliament (Christiansborg Palace Square). Local Vietnam activist Wilfred Gluud spoke as a private person, on the connection to the Vietnam War. The demonstration was attended by upwards of 500 people. The slogan was "Boycott Monsanto products". Monsanto is known for GMO's (genetically modified organisms), the herbicide Roundup and the defoliant Agent Orange.

### ***Wilfred Gluud, Vietnam activist, Copenhagen, Denmark***

The Vietnam War<sup>1</sup> is still a reality for millions of Vietnamese and Americans and their descendants who continue to suffer from the effects of Agent Orange. In 10 years the U.S. military sprayed 76 million litres of toxic defoliants<sup>2</sup> in South Vietnam<sup>3</sup>. Agent Orange contained dioxin, one of the world's most toxic chemicals, and the World Health Organization considers dioxins as very toxic, carcinogenic and the cause of birth defects<sup>4</sup>.

### ***Solidarity with Vietnam***

My name is Wilfred Gluud, and I've been working with solidarity with Vietnam since 1970, when I joined the political organisation the Danish Vietnam Committees<sup>5</sup>. The major political issue in the 60s and 70s were protesting against America's brutal warfare in Vietnam<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> J. Llewellyn et al, "The costs of the Vietnam War", Alpha History, accessed 1-6-2013.

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia: Agent Orange. [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agent\\_Orange](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agent_Orange)

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia: South Vietnam. [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South\\_Vietnam](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Vietnam)

<sup>4</sup> WHO: Dioxins and their effects on human health. [www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs225/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs225/en/)

<sup>5</sup> DDV – De Danske Vietnamkomiteer, [www.davifo.dk/historie/vietnambevaegelsen](http://www.davifo.dk/historie/vietnambevaegelsen). Information only in Danish Vietnambevægelsen on Leksikon.org: [www.leksikon.org/art.php?n=528](http://www.leksikon.org/art.php?n=528). Information only in Danish

<sup>6</sup> "Vietnamkrigen og Vietnambevægelsen i Danmark" by Irene Clausen, Internationalt Forum, Copenhagen. GAIA Magazine 44, spring 2004. Information only in Danish. [www.internationalforum.dk/Vietnamkrigen-og](http://www.internationalforum.dk/Vietnamkrigen-og)

After the Vietnam War ended in 1975 we founded the Danish Vietnamese Association<sup>7</sup> in 1976, to continue to support Vietnam. I joined the board in 1976 and have stayed on since then. Since 1990 we have used the word "friendship", and have the objective to "promote co-operation and understanding between Danes and Vietnamese."

The Danish Vietnamese Association provides information on the current situation in Vietnam with the quarterly magazine "Vietnam Ajour"<sup>8</sup> and in the period 1991 to 2012, with the help of doctors and nurses, we completed 6 projects<sup>9</sup>, in cooperation with the largest Children's Hospital in Saigon<sup>10</sup>. In total 35.5 million Danish crowns (6 million US \$), mostly funded by Danida<sup>11</sup> (Danish International Development Agency).

### **USA sprayed toxic herbicides**

During the decade from 1961 to 1971; the U.S. military sprayed 76 million litres of toxic defoliants, of which 61% was Agent Orange<sup>12</sup>, over 26,000 villages with area of more than 3 million acres. Agent Orange sprayed onto South Vietnam contained 366 kg dioxin, which is an extremely huge amount. One microgram is a millionth of a gram, and 2,100 micrograms is enough to kill a grown man.

In South Vietnam USA focused on destruction of forests and mangroves along the coast<sup>13</sup>, to prevent the guerrillas from finding shelter. The two mangrove forests which were hardest hit were in Can Gio outside Saigon and Ca Mau at the southern tip of Vietnam.

### **Monsanto failed to respond**

It was Monsanto together with the company Dow who were responsible for the herbicide Agent Orange. The two companies discovered that the herbicide contained the very dangerous poison dioxin, but took no action. When in 1970 the number of US soldiers who became ill was growing, it was decided to stop spraying Agent Orange<sup>14</sup>. And all spraying of herbicides completely stopped in 1971.<sup>15</sup>

People exposed to Agent Orange and dioxin, become incapacitated by illness. And they die too early.<sup>16</sup>

### **Millions sick from Agent Orange**

The Vietnam Red Cross estimates that one million people in Vietnam are victims of Agent Orange, and have disabilities or other suffering from an array of chronic conditions.<sup>17</sup>. Independent sources claim the figure is 650.000, while another 500,000 have already

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<sup>7</sup> Website on Danish Vietnamese Association in English: [www.davifo.dk/danish-vietnamese-association-dva-english](http://www.davifo.dk/danish-vietnamese-association-dva-english)

<sup>8</sup> Website: Vietnam Ajour quarterly magazine. Information only in Danish. [www.davifo.dk/vietnam-ajour](http://www.davifo.dk/vietnam-ajour)

<sup>9</sup> Website: "Sundhedsprojekter i Vietnam". Information only in Danish.

[www.davifo.dk/bistand/sundhedsprojekt-boerneoverlevelse#subhedsprojektor](http://www.davifo.dk/bistand/sundhedsprojekt-boerneoverlevelse#subhedsprojektor)

<sup>10</sup> Website "Bệnh Viện Nhi Đồng 1". In Vietnamese only: [www.nhidong.org.vn](http://www.nhidong.org.vn)

<sup>11</sup> Website: DANIDA - Danish development cooperation. [www.um.dk/en/danida-en/](http://www.um.dk/en/danida-en/)

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Jeanne Mager Stellman et al.: Overview: Flight records reveal full extent of Agent Orange contamination Nature April 2003 page 649 - The extent and patterns of usage of Agent Orange and other herbicides in Vietnam in Nature (April 2003; Vlm 422: 681-687)

[www.davifo.dk/userfiles/file/pdf\\_ao/AO\\_Stellman\\_Nature\\_feature.pdf](http://www.davifo.dk/userfiles/file/pdf_ao/AO_Stellman_Nature_feature.pdf)

[www.davifo.dk/userfiles/file/pdf\\_ao/AO\\_Stellman\\_Nature\\_article.pdf](http://www.davifo.dk/userfiles/file/pdf_ao/AO_Stellman_Nature_article.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Rehabilitation of Mangrove Forests Destroyed by Toxic Chemicals during War in South Vietnam. By Dr. Vo Quy, with the Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES) Vietnam National University. Salem News May-08-2012. [www.salem-news.com/articles/may082012/mangrove-vietnam.php](http://www.salem-news.com/articles/may082012/mangrove-vietnam.php)

<sup>14</sup> Chicago Tribune Watchdog Report: Agent Orange's lethal legacy: Defoliants more dangerous than they had to be.

[www.chicagotribune.com/health/agentorange/chi-agent-orange-dioxindec17.0.2121785.full.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/agentorange/chi-agent-orange-dioxindec17.0.2121785.full.story)

Interview with Fred A. Wilcox's about his book "Scorched Earth: Legacies of Chemical Warfare in Vietnam" (September 13, 2011). [www.failurmag.com/feature/article/agent\\_orange\\_vietnam](http://www.failurmag.com/feature/article/agent_orange_vietnam)

<sup>15</sup> Aspen Institute August 2011: Agent Orange in Vietnam Program: History: Agent Orange/Dioxin in Vietnam.

[www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/history](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/history)

<sup>16</sup> American Cancer Society: Agent Orange and Cancer. Last Medical Review: 03/11/2013.

[www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/intheworkplace/agent-orange-and-cancer](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/othercarcinogens/intheworkplace/agent-orange-and-cancer)

<sup>17</sup> U.S. in first effort to clean up Agent Orange in Vietnam. CNN August 10, 2012.

[www.edition.cnn.com/2012/08/10/world/asia/vietnam-us-agent-orange/](http://www.edition.cnn.com/2012/08/10/world/asia/vietnam-us-agent-orange/)

Speech May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 - March Against Monsanto - Copenhagen, Denmark

died<sup>18</sup>. There are estimated 150,000 children with birth defects and disabilities caused by Agent Orange<sup>19</sup>.

Vietnam's government provides a small monthly compensation to more than 200,000 veterans<sup>20</sup>. They became ill because of Agent Orange while fighting in South Vietnam, either in the liberation front FNL<sup>21</sup> or the North Vietnam Army<sup>22</sup>.

### ***U.S. war veterans also exposed***

Thousands of U.S. war veterans who returned from Vietnam complained about illnesses that were caused by exposure to Agent Orange and dioxin<sup>23</sup>. The U.S. government has since 1991 recognized diseases caused by Agent Orange, as eligible for payment of monthly compensation<sup>24</sup>.

In 2010, just over one million U.S. veterans from the Vietnam War, were paid 16.2 billion U.S. dollars, by the U.S. Department of War Veterans<sup>25</sup>. The Department has not calculated if it's caused by Agent Orange and dioxin or other causes of illness. Nor the total amount of compensation for the years, that have passed since the Vietnam War ended.

### ***Children with terrible deformities***

The children born to parents exposed to dioxin during the Vietnam War<sup>26</sup>; and civilian Vietnamese in the south of Vietnam - who were sprayed intensively, especially neighbours to U.S. air bases, so-called "hot spots"<sup>27</sup> - are still suffering terrible deformities<sup>28</sup>.

***The children of Vietnam War veterans are now in the second and third generations.***

***They are victims of Agent Orange and dioxin, and Monsanto should pay compensation for the damage they have caused!***

### ***LINKS:***

Agent Orange News: [www.davifo.dk/agentorange](http://www.davifo.dk/agentorange)

Agent Orange Documentation: [www.davifo.dk/ao-docs](http://www.davifo.dk/ao-docs)

<sup>18</sup> "Spectre orange". The Guardian, 29 March 2003. [www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/mar/29/usa.adrianlevy](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/mar/29/usa.adrianlevy)

<sup>19</sup> Health issues: Living disabled. RCRC Magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. [www.redcross.int/EN/mag/magazine2004\\_3/22-23.html](http://www.redcross.int/EN/mag/magazine2004_3/22-23.html)

Vietnam's war against Agent Orange. BBC website 14 June, 2004. [www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/3798581.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/3798581.stm)  
Impact on Vietnam. 2010 Agent Orange Record. [www.agentorangerecord.com/impact\\_on\\_vietnam/health/](http://www.agentorangerecord.com/impact_on_vietnam/health/)

<sup>20</sup> Aspen Institute August 2011: What Can Be Done to Help the People in Vietnam?

<sup>21</sup> Wikipedia: Viet Cong. [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viet\\_Cong](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viet_Cong)

<sup>22</sup> Wikipedia: Vietnam People's Army. [www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam\\_People%27s\\_Army](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_People%27s_Army)

<sup>23</sup> Aspen Institute August 2011: Agent Orange and U.S. Veterans. [www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/program-home/agent-orange-us-veterans](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/program-home/agent-orange-us-veterans)

<sup>24</sup> Agent Orange; VA Disability Compensation. VA Central Office, Washington, DC, January 1997. [www.tpromo2.com/usvi/agent-b3.htm](http://www.tpromo2.com/usvi/agent-b3.htm)

<sup>25</sup> Aspen Institute August 2011: Agent Orange and U.S. Veterans. [www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/program-home/agent-orange-us-veterans](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/program-home/agent-orange-us-veterans)

<sup>26</sup> Association between Agent Orange and birth defects: systematic review and meta-analysis. Oxford Journals of Medicine: International Journal of Epidemiology. October 2006, Volume 35, Issue 5  
Pp. 1220-1230. [www.ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/35/5/1220.full](http://www.ije.oxfordjournals.org/content/35/5/1220.full)

<sup>27</sup> Aspen Institute August 2011: Hot Spots: Cleaning Up Dioxin-Contaminated Soils. [www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/cleaning-dioxin-contaminated-soils](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange/cleaning-dioxin-contaminated-soils)

<sup>28</sup> Effects of Agent Orange 'ongoing silently' in children. CNN World. 10 photos by Hiroko Tanaka. [www.cnnphotos.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/30/effects-of-agent-orange-ongoing-silently-in-children/](http://www.cnnphotos.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/30/effects-of-agent-orange-ongoing-silently-in-children/)