

DAV can help vets exposed to Agent Orange

The list of American casualties of the Vietnam War continues to mount, even though the United States' involvement in the fighting in Indochina ended several years ago.

Hundreds of thousands — possibly many more — American GIs were exposed to Agent Orange and other powerfully toxic defoliants while fighting in southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange contains dioxin, which Barry Commoner and many other scientists have called "the most toxic man-made substance known."

Dioxin has been blamed for a number of severe health problems and some deaths among Vietnam veterans, as well as birth defects among some of their children. These disabilities are showing up years after exposure to herbicides such as Agent Orange.

The 622,000-member Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has set up a nationwide program to assist these veterans in filing claims with the Veterans Administration (VA) for health care and disability benefits for illness that may be associated with dioxin poisoning.

The most common symptoms attributed to dioxin poisoning include:

- Numbness in fingers, toes, arms and legs in varying degrees.
- Nervous disorders, especially loss or decrease in the sensitivity of the senses.
- Psychological effects, including loss of memory, confusion, aggression or irritability.
- Skin rashes, specifically chloracne, which resembles a severe case of acne and is usually found on the face, arms, chest, back or legs.
- Altered sex drive, including diminished sex drive or impotence among men and increased sexual activity among women.

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Gen. Haig: Unsure of presidential bid

By TOM LONERGAN

Gen. Alexander M. Haig remains undecided about joining the crowd of candidates vying for the Republican presidential nomination.

The recently retired North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) commander in Europe said in Oakland County this week he has received "a greater level of support" for a presidential bid since returning to the country in June.

However, he added: "I'm still not overwhelmed by the din."

HAIG SPOKE at a press conference in Bloomfield Hills Monday before hobnobbing with Oakland County Republicans at an \$150 a couple fundraiser for the county Republican committee. His appearance here was part of a national speaking tour.

Chief of staff under former presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, Haig said there's no favorite for the GOP presidential nomination.

"It's an open horse race at this point," he said, although he acknowledged former California Gov. Ronald Reagan is "clearly a frontrunner today."

Haig didn't think his tenure as Nixon's last chief of staff would be a liability in seeking the Republican presidential nod. "I'm not the least bit self-conscious of my performance (under Nixon)," Haig said. He said he was called to the White House "at a time of national crisis" and if asked to serve under similar circumstances, would do so again.

After Nixon resigned in August 1974, Haig stayed on under Ford before taking the NATO assignment.

THE 1980s, Haig said, pose "most serious challenges to the United States and those nations in the world that share our values."

Haig referred more than once to a "deep sense of drift" in the country which he said has been caused by a stagnant economy,

a worsening energy dilemma and "declining American prestige abroad."

Haig said the federal government's deficit spending "has to be brought under control," the money supply should be "kept in line with goods being produced," and there should be less regulation of "industrial modernization and the nuclear power area."

"As unfortunate and as uncomfortable as it is," Haig said, "we are going to have to continue with the development of nuclear power."

He said the country has to "utilize more coal" for its future energy needs and enhance, "with proper safeguards," the development of nuclear power.

Nuclear plants supplied about 14 percent of the nation's energy needs in 1973, Haig said, noting the situation has "changed little due to regulatory restraints."



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