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## U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515

<http://veterans.house.gov>

July 12, 2004

Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
Department of Defense  
The Pentagon, Room 3E880  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know, I have been very concerned that the extent of Agent Orange military use, testing and exposure be made public, so that those who served our Nation may properly be evaluated, treated and compensated for any ill effects which resulted from their military service. It is my understanding that the Department of the Air Force was responsible for transporting Agent Orange, similar herbicides and other hazardous chemicals from an Army Depot in Okinawa to Johnston Atoll as part of "Operation Red Hat" in 1971 and 1972. Your letter of September 23, 2003 does not list Okinawa as a site where Vietnam-era herbicides were used.

I am particularly interested in ascertaining when and where Agent Orange and similar herbicides were stored on Okinawa and whether or not there was any usage of herbicides or reports of spillage from drum corrosion or any other event which potentially involved exposure of servicemembers to these herbicides. As a Marine serving on Okinawa during the Vietnam War, I was assigned to guard highly secret areas, but have no specific knowledge of herbicides being used or stored there.

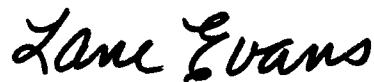
Given the importance of this issue to veterans who served in Okinawa during the Vietnam era, I am requesting that you provide me with all unclassified information concerning "Operation Red Hat" and any evidence of the use or storage of these herbicides on Okinawa during the period when they were reportedly kept there. In the event that these documents remain classified, I am requesting that you contact Mr. Len Sistek, Democratic Staff Director for the

Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
July 12, 2004  
Page 2

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Mr. Sistek has the necessary clearances to review classified material.

I would appreciate a response to this letter by September 7, 2004. If you have any questions about this request, please have your staff contact Mary Ellen Mc Carthy, Democratic Staff Director, Subcommittee on Benefits, at (202) 225-9756. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lane Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

LANE EVANS

Ranking Democratic Member

cc: The Honorable Anthony J. Principi