



September 22, 1997

E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U.S. NAVY (RET.)

The Honorable Hershel Gober
Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Hershel
Dear Secretary Gober:

I have been provided with a copy of the September 17 letter sent to you by Richard F. Schultz, Executive Director of the VVA.

The purpose of this letter is to strongly support, in my capacity as Chairman of the Agent Orange Coordinating Council, his comments.

We were able to get Congress to disestablish the flawed Committee on Environmental Health Hazards which had previously been responsible for recommending advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and to have that assignment given to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). When the NAS assigned responsibility for the biannual reports on the science of Agent Orange to the Institute of Medicine (IOM), I was able to win an agreement from Dr. Kenneth Shine that no "company doctors" would be used on IOM panels studying the science. This agreement has led to objective scientific assessments.

In connection with the prospective meeting, I hope it will be possible to win your support for a similar arrangement with regard to the studies being done by the Veterans Administration so that the one referred to in Mr. Schultz's letter can be removed from the VA's Agent Orange study.

I am looking forward to discussing these matters with you.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)
Chairman, Agent Orange Coordinating Council