

CBW  
23  
October 1970

Dear Dr. Meselson:

Enclosed is a MACV news release designed to preempt news stories which I have done for Pacifica Radio and a friend from Time have sent on the use of orange in I Corps.

Members of the 98th Chemical Detachment at Duk Pho told the Time reporter and myself that they had been using orange for crop denial operations (it is not true, as MACV claims, that it was just for perimeter defoliation) throughout the summer. They knew it had been banned, and finally told the Time guy because he had been the source of some of the condemning material on My Lai. Dow Chemical representatives ~~as~~ as the MACV release does, that the ban on ~~orange~~ orange was only "temporary", therefore none of the supplies had been withdrawal from the field. They would not tell me which units besides the 98th had stocks, and whether anyone else was using. As this incident shows, of course, anyone who has it could be using it.

I am going up to visit as many other Chemical units as possible *in I Corps* this week, but it will be sheer luck to find someone who hasn't been shut up by their commanding officers.

~~Pentagon~~

As you know it is typical ~~Pentagon~~ ploys (I've had it happen several times) to announce an incident like this previous to the publishing of news reports they know are in preparation. Besides making them look somewhat better, announcing an investigation means that they can say there is no comment until the investigation is completed, thereby thwarting other newsmen's attempts to follow up the story.

Perhaps this is no surprise to you, but, if you like, I'll keep you informed. I'd like a copy of your report when it's finished. I'm writing a piece for Science on this, but haven't had word yet whether they're interested.

Sincerely,

*Judith Coburn*  
Judith Coburn