

Operation

«Ranch Hand»

Ranch Hand



- "Ranch Hand" — the long-term operation of armed forces of the USA during war in Vietnam directed on destruction of vegetation in the Southern Vietnam and Laos. Destruction of vegetation of the jungle that facilitated detection of divisions of the North Vietnamese army and the guerrilla was the purpose of dispersion.

- It is one of the most known cases of application of tactics "scorched earth" and uses of the chemical weapon in the history.



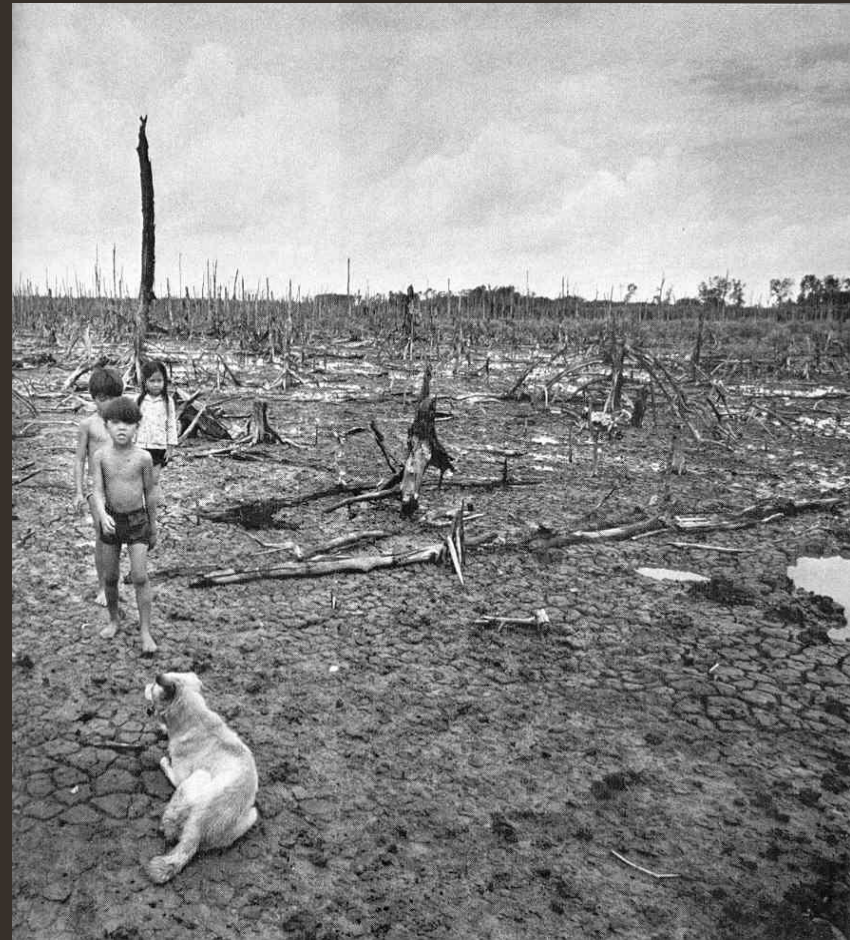
«Agent Orange»



- The operation "Ranch Hand" was begun in January, 1962 and proceeded till 1971. The chemical agents carrying names Pink, Green, Purple, Blue, Orange were applied (names came from color of marking of containers with chemicals). The greatest fame was gained by the Orange agent (Agent Orange) who was toxic for a human body.

Effects

During war the army of the USA sprayed in the territory of the Southern Vietnam 72 million liters of defoliants of "Agent Orange" for deforestation, including 44 million liters containing dioxine. Dioxine is resistant substance, getting to a human body with water and food, it causes various diseases of a liver and blood, mass congenital uglinesses of newborns and violation of normal course of pregnancy. After application by the American military of defoliants after war some tens of thousands of people were lost. In total in Vietnam about 4,8 million victims of dispersion of defoliants, including three million directly injured are.



Effects

- Even during war application of defoliants was exposed to criticism; subsequently it became clear that the "Agent Orange" led to a serious illness at a large number of the American and South Korean soldiers, and also the local Vietnamese population. Now residents of many areas in the south of Vietnam continue to be influenced by consequences of the operation "Ranch Hand".



After Spraying



- Large-scale use of chemicals by the American troops led to serious consequences. The Mangrove woods (500 thousand hectares) were almost completely destroyed, 60% (about 1 million hectares) of the jungle and 30% (more than 100 thousand hectares) of the flat woods are struck. Since 1960 productivity of rubber plantations decreased by 75%. The American troops destroyed from 40 to 100% of crops of bananas, rice, sweet potatoes, a papaya, tomatoes, 70% of coconut plantations, 110 thousand hectares of plantations of a beef-wood.

■ As a result of use of chemicals the ecological balance of Vietnam seriously changed. In the struck areas from 150 bird species remained 18, there was almost total disappearance amphibious and insects, the number of fishes in the rivers was reduced and there was a change of their structure. The microbiological structure of soils was broken, plants are poisoned. The number of types of wood and shrubby breeds of a damp rainforest was sharply reduced: in the struck areas there were single species of trees and some species of the prickly herbs not suitable in a forage to cattle.

