

CANADIANS HOLD COURT ON THE AGENT ORANGE INQUIRY



Ipsos Reid

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Toronto, ON – With public hearings ongoing as part of the government inquiry into the use of Agent Orange and other defoliants at the Canadian Forces Base in Gagetown, N.B. in the 1960s, '70s and '80s, a new national Ipsos Reid survey, provided exclusively to CanWest/Global, asked Canadians to offer their perspectives on this emerging issue.

Canadians are divided when asked to consider the causes of illness for those who are sick: half (48%) agree that there are probably other more significant reasons for their illness than being exposed to Agent Orange.

But while they may be unsure of the causes of illness, most (65%) are confident that the government inquiry will uncover the facts and ensure that those who deserve to be compensated will be compensated.

And if they're sick today, 93% agree that soldiers that came into contact with Agent Orange at Gagetown should be compensated (70% strongly agree). A further 76% believe that civilians who were living around Gagetown during the tests, but may have only had indirect contact with Agent Orange, should also be compensated if they're sick today.

Because the Canadian and U.S. governments undertook these Agent Orange tests together, a very strong majority of Canadians (87%) agree that the Canadian government should be asking the U.S. government to pay part of the compensation costs.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll provided exclusively to CanWest/Global and fielded from September 20th to September 22nd 2005. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 988 adult Canadians were interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the aggregate results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have



been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within each sub-grouping of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

Canadians Split When It Comes To Causes Of Illness: Half (48%) Believe There's Probably Other More Significant Reasons For Their Illness Than Being Exposed To Agent Orange...

Half of Canadians (48%) agree with the statement “while I sympathize with people who are sick, there’s probably other more significant reasons for their illness than being exposed to Agent Orange in the 1960s” (12% strongly agree). Just slightly less than half (45%) disagree with this statement (20% strongly) and a further 7% “don’t know”.

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (62%) are the most likely of all Canadians to agree with this statement, followed by residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (57%).
- Younger adults (aged 18-34) are more likely than those who are 35 and older to agree with this statement (54% vs. 45%).

But Two-Thirds (65%) Are Confident Government Inquiry Will Uncover The Facts And Ensure Those Who Deserve It Are Compensated...

Sixty-five percent agree with the statement that “I’m confident that a government inquiry into this issue will uncover the facts and make sure that the right people receive compensation” (30% strongly agree). One-third (34%) disagree with this statement (14% strongly).

- Agreement is highest in Atlantic Canada (74%) and Quebec (73%), while Saskatchewan/Manitoba (66%) follows.
- Disagreement is highest in British Columbia (42%), Alberta (38%) and Ontario (37%).



Nine In Ten (93%) Agree That Those Soldiers Who Came Into Direct Contact With Agent Orange At Gagetown Should Be Compensated If They're Sick Today...

Nine in ten Canadians (93%) agree that “soldiers who came into direct contact with Agent Orange at Gagetown should be compensated if they’re sick today” (70% strongly agree). Only 5% disagree with this statement.

- Agreement is high across all regions of the country with little variance.

Three-Quarters (76%) Feel That Those Civilians Who Were Living Around Gagetown During The Test, But May Have Only Had Indirect Contact With Agent Orange, Should Be Compensated If Sick...

Three-quarters (76%) of Canadians feel that those “civilians who were living around Gagetown during the tests, but may have only had indirect contact with Agent Orange, should be compensated if they’re sick today” (38% strongly agree). Twenty-one percent of Canadians disagree with this notion (6% strongly disagree).

- Agreement is highest in British Columbia (79%) and Quebec (79%).

Strong Majority (87%) Feel The Canadian Government Should Be Asking The US Government To Pay Part Of Compensation Costs Because They Ran Agent Orange Tests Jointly...

A strong majority (87%) agree with the statement “the Canadian government should be asking the US government to pay part of the compensation costs since they ran the tests together” (65% strongly agree). Only a small proportion of Canadians (11%) disagree with this statement.

- Agreement is very high in Atlantic Canada (93%), Quebec (90%), British Columbia (87%) and Ontario (86%), but weakens slightly in Alberta (82%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (78%).



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-30-

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