

(5) Napalm: *Burning People Alive*

Napalm was invented at Harvard University in 1942. It is a jellied gas named after the naphthenic and palmitic acids originally used in its manufacture. The mixture of gasoline, benzene and aluminum or polystyrene are housed in an aluminum casing. They use a trinitrotoluene (TNT) explosion to ignite white phosphorus which burns at high enough temperature to ignite the napalm. During the Vietnam war, napalm B was developed. Polystyrene and benzene replaced the naphthenate and palmitate, while white phosphorus was replaced by thermitite.

Napalm burns at more than 5,000 F°. It is used in firebombs and land mines dropped from planes or in hand-held flamethrowers. Napalm has been used to burn down forests, villages, cities and, of course, their inhabitants. It sticks to the skin and can keep burning to the bone. Napalm fires are so intense they can asphyxiate people nearby by sucking the oxygen out of the air.

World War II:

Napalm was first used during WWII and became popular as a means of burning whole Japanese cities to the ground. One firebomb could affect a 2.5 square kilometre area. The A-26 Invader, which has performed at Canadian air shows, dropped 500-750lb napalm bombs during WWII.

The Korea War:

During the Korean War, millions of innocent Koreans died due to the indiscriminate bombing of non-military targets. Napalm played a major role in wiping out whole villages. It is estimated that the US dropped approximately 250,000 pounds of napalm per day. Another estimate is that the US dropped a total of seven million gallons of napalm on Korea. In 1952, an average daily bombing included 70,000 gallons of napalm. Among the types of warplanes that napalmed Korea are the following that have appeared at Canadian air shows:

- A-26 Invader (US)
- F-105 Delta Dart / Thunderchief (US)
- F-80 Shooting Star (US)
- F-86E Sabre (US)

Kim Phuc said if she ever met the pilot who bombed her:
"I would tell him we cannot change history, but we should try to do good things for the present and for the future to promote peace."



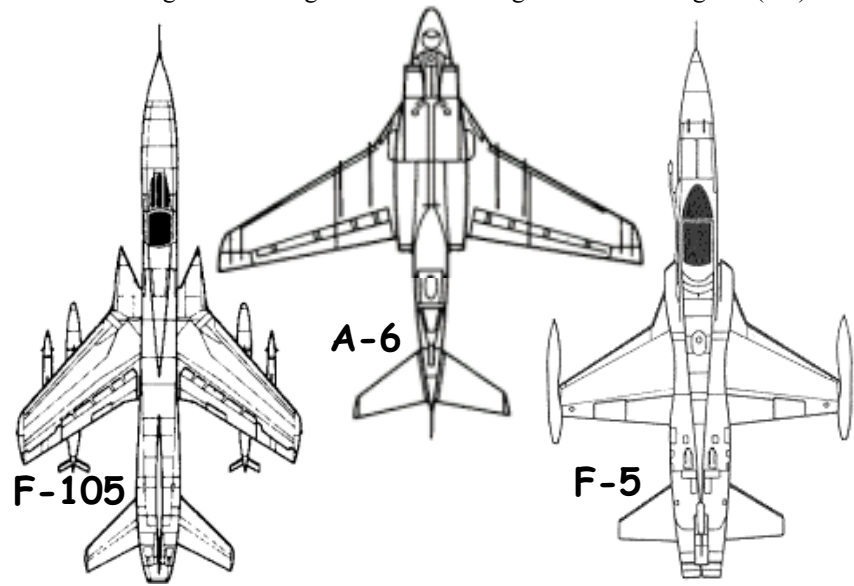
Photo by Nick Ut Source: <www.mindfully.org/Plastic/Napalm-Recycled.htm>

The Vietnam War:

Perhaps more than any other weapon used by the US in Vietnam, napalm came to publicly represent the horror, inhumanity and criminality of that war. The US dropped about 400,000 tons of napalm on Vietnam. One indelible image left on many minds is the photo of a 9-year-old Vietnamese girl, running in terror from her village after being hit with

napalm. Phan Thi Kim Phuc now lives in Toronto.

Among the warplanes that dropped napalm on Southeast Asians are the following that have provided entertainment at Canadian air shows:
 A-26 Invader (US)
 A-6 Intruder (US)
 F-105 Delta Dart / Thunderchief (US)
 F-5 Tiger / Freedom Fighter (US)



"We burned down just about every city in North & South Korea."
 US General Curtis LeMay, 1965.

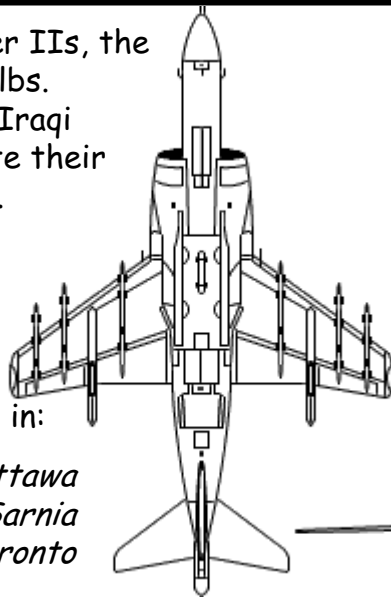
"Napalm was proving to be 'a top all-purpose weapon' in Korea; an average of 70,000 gallons were employed each day against enemy personnel and supply lines."

Source: Stephen Endicott and Edward Hagerman, *The United States and Biological Warfare*, 1998, p.63.

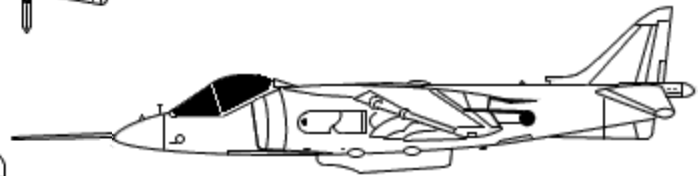
Using AV-8 Harrier IIs, the US used 250,000 lbs. of napalm against Iraqi troops and to ignite their oil-filled trenches.

Since then, AV-8s have fired up enthusiastic crowds at military air shows in:

Abbotsford *Ottawa*
Hamilton *Sarnia*
Lethbridge *Toronto*



AV-8 Harrier II



The Gulf War:

On February 22, BBC-1 had a report on napalm, confirming its use by the U.S.-led coalition forces on Iraqi targets. The video footage showed a U.S. Air Force ground worker loading napalm bombs onto a plane and putting fuses into the bombs. Reporter Brian Barron stated:

“Napalm is an old and crude bomb alongside much of the allies’ high-tech arsenal. But it is a terrifying weapon that kills both by burning and suffocation. Until today, there had been speculation the US would hold it in reserve for massive retaliation if the Iraqis carried out their threat to use chemical weapons.”

Explaining the use of napalm, former Reagan administration official Kenneth Adelman declared on BBC-4 radio: “Well, I think the objective was to make sure that the [Iraqi military], behind the lines, er, was as wiped out as possible so that we would not risk American and British boys if we needed to go on the ground war.”

Adelman speculated that aversion to napalm in Vietnam resulted from the inability to tell who was the “enemy” and who were innocent peasants. However, Adelman explained that in the Gulf war, “it’s quite clear, they wear uniforms, they sit in tanks, they cook over fire or whatever they do, they look like military, they are military and they’re clearly identified as such. And so I think that it is proper in that time to kind of weed ‘em out.”

And so, Iraqis conscripted by Saddam Hussein were the targets of allied bombing, “weeded out” by napalm and other weaponry.

During the destruction of Iraq in 1991, the US Air Force used 500-pound fire bombs called MK 77s. They dropped about 250,000 pounds of these napalm bombs to “weed out” Iraqi troops and to deliberately ignite the oil-filled trenches that they had constructed to stop US tanks.

Source: <www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/papers/gulfwar7.htm>

Other Napalm Bombers Several other warplanes that are equipped to carry napalm bombs have also performed at Canadian air shows. They include the following:	0/A-10A Thunderbolt II (US)
	A-10 Thunderbolt (US)
	A-10A Thunderbolt II (US)
	ADV Tornado (UK)
	ADWa/o Tornado (Italy)
	F-15 Eagle (US)
	F/A-18C Hornet (US)
	IDS Tornado (Germany)
	MiG-29 Fulcrum (Germany)