

PICO SEARCH:

Cancer Epidemic Caused by U.S. WMD

M.D. Says Depleted Uranium Definitively Linked

By Christopher Bollyn

A growing number of U.S. military personnel who are serving, or have served, in Iraq or Afghanistan has become sick and disabled from a variety of symptoms commonly known as Gulf War Syndrome. Depleted uranium (DU) weapons have been blamed for many of the symptoms.

“Gulf war vets are coming down with these symptoms at twice the rate of vets from previous conflicts,” said Barbara A. Goodno from the Department of Defense’s Deployment Health Support Directorate.

A recent discovery by *American Free Press* that nearly half the soldiers in one returned unit have malignant growths has provided the scientific community with “critical evidence,” experts say, to help understand exactly how DU affects humans.

One of the first published researchers of Gulf War Syndrome, Dr. András Korényi-Both, told AFP that 27 percent to 28 percent of Gulf War veterans have suffered chronic health problems, more than five times the rate of Viet Nam vets and four times the rate of Korean War vets.

Korényi-Both said his son had recently returned from Iraq, where he had been part of the initial Gulf War II assault from Kuwait to Baghdad. From his unit of 20 men, eight now have “malignant growths,” Korényi-Both said.

Korényi-Both is not an expert on DU but has written extensively about how the fine desert sand blowing around Iraq and the Arabian peninsula provides an ideal vehicle for toxins, increasing the range and effect of atomic, biological and chemical (ABC) agents, such as DU, that attach themselves to the particles.

Korényi-Both described how, during the 1991 Gulf War, he and others had inhaled large quantities of sand dust that could have been laden with ABC agents. The dust “destroyed our immune systems,” he said.

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New Books

FULK'S THEORY

Marion Fulk, a former nuclear chemical physicist at the Lawrence Livermore lab, is investigating how DU affects the human body. Fulk said that eight malignancies out of 20, in 16 months, “is spectacular—and of serious concern.”

The high malignancy rate found in this unit appears to have been caused by battlefield exposure to DU weapons.

According to Fulk, when DU, consisting mainly of uranium-238, decays, it transforms into two short-lived and “very hot” isotopes of thorium and protactinium, then undergoes further decay to another uranium isotope, giving off high-energy radiation at each stage of the process.

Scientist Leuren Moret said: “We can expect to see multiple cancers in one person. These multiple unrelated cancers in the same individual have been reported in Yugoslavia and Iraq in families that had no history of any cancer. This is unknown in the previous studies of cancer,” she said, “a new phenomenon.”

Goodno questioned Korényi-Both's report that eight of 20 recently returned soldiers from one unit had experienced malignant growths. Goodno and Korényi-Both did agree, however, that Iraqi ABC agents had not played a role in the 2003 invasion.

This is significant because three factors have generally been blamed for causing Gulf War Syndrome: Iraqi chemical and biological weapons, the cocktail of vaccinations given to coalition soldiers and DU. The absence of any detectable Iraqi ABC agents during the 2003 invasion of Iraq narrows the potential factors for delayed illness or disability among veterans to prewar vaccinations and DU.

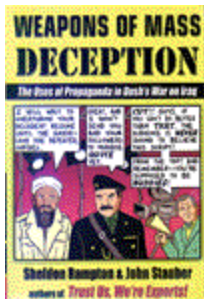
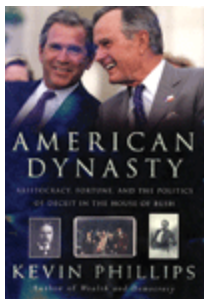
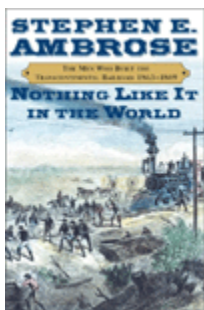
While the number of disabled vets from previous wars is decreasing by about 35,000 per year, since the “war on terror” began in 2001, the total number of disabled vets has grown to some 2.5 million—“more than ever before,” Brad Flohr of the Department of Veterans Affairs said. Asked if there are more disabled vets now than after World War II, Flohr said he believed so.

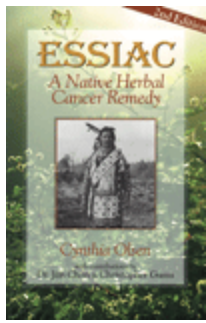
Terry Jemison of the Department of Veterans Affairs told AFP that current statistics indicate that more than half a million veterans of the 14-year-old Gulf War I era are now receiving disability compensation. During this period, some 7,035 soldiers are reported having been wounded in Iraq.

With 518,739 disabled “Gulf War I era veterans” currently receiving disability compensation, according to Jemison, the number of veterans disabled after the war is more than 73 times the number of wounded, in and out of combat, from the entire 14-year conflict with Iraq.

DEPLETED URANIUM WEAPONS

Last December, Dr. Asaf Durakovic, a nuclear medicine expert who has





conducted extensive research on depleted uranium, examined nine soldiers from the 442nd Military Police Company of New York and found that four of the men had absorbed or inhaled DU.

Several of the men had traces of another isotope, U-236, which is only produced in a nuclear reactor.

“These men were almost certainly exposed to radioactive weapons on the battlefield,” Durakovae said.

“Due to the current proliferation of DU weaponry, the battlefields of the future will be unlike any battlefields in history,” Durakovae, then chief of Nuclear Medicine for the Veterans Administration, said after Gulf War I, in which he served.

Since 1991, the U.S. military has used DU in munitions as penetrating rods, which destroy enemy tanks and their occupants, and as armor plating on U.S. tanks. When DU penetrating rods strike a hard target some of the radioactive and toxic uranium is vaporized into ultra-fine particles that are easily inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

According to a survey of 10,051 Gulf War I veterans, conducted between 1991 and 1995 by Vic Sylvester and the Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Association, 82 percent of veterans reported having entered captured Iraqi vehicles. “This would suggest that 123,000 soldiers have been directly exposed to DU,” Durakovae said.

“Since the effects of contamination by uranium cannot be directed or contained, uranium’s chemical and radiological toxicity will create environments that are hostile not only to the health of enemy forces but of one’s own forces as well,” Durakovae said.

“Because of the chemical and radiological toxicity of DU, the small number of particles trapped in the lungs, kidneys and bone greatly increase the risk of cancer and all other illnesses over time,” said Durakovae, an expert of internal contamination of radioisotopes.

According to Durakovae, other symptoms associated with DU poisoning are: emotional and mental deterioration, fatigue, loss of bowel and bladder control, and numerous forms of cancer. Such symptoms are increasingly showing up in Iraq’s children and among Gulf War I veterans and their offspring, he said.

“Although I personally served in Operation Desert Shield as unit commander,” Durakovae said, “my expertise of internal contamination was never used because we were never informed of the intended use of DU prior to or during the war.”

“The numbers are overwhelming, but the potential horrors only get worse,” Robert C. Koehler of the Chicago-based *Tribune Media Services* wrote in his March 25 article on DU weapons, “Silent Genocide.”

“DU dust does more than wreak havoc on the immune systems of those who breathe it or touch it; the substance also alters one’s genetic code,”

YOUNG AFP
READERS

Koehler wrote. "The Pentagon's response to such charges is denial, denial, denial. And the American media is its moral co-conspirator."

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