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Heads roll at Veterans Administration

Mushrooming depleted uranium (DU) scandal blamed

by Bob Nichols

Project Censored Award Winner

<http://www.sfbayview.com/012605/headsroll012605.shtml>

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, this material is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes.

Preventive Psychiatry E-Newsletter charged Monday that the reason Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi stepped down earlier this month was the growing scandal surrounding the use of uranium munitions in the Iraq War.



Considering the tons of depleted uranium used by the U.S., the Iraq war can truly be called a nuclear war.

Writing in Preventive Psychiatry E-Newsletter No. 169, Arthur N. Bernklau, executive director of Veterans for Constitutional Law in New York, stated, "The real reason for Mr. Principi's departure was really never given, however a special report published by eminent scientist Leuren Moret naming depleted uranium as the definitive cause of the 'Gulf War Syndrome' has fed a growing scandal about the continued use of uranium munitions by the US Military."

Bernklau continued, "This malady (from uranium munitions), that thousands of our military have suffered and died from, has finally been identified as the cause of this sickness, eliminating the guessing. The terrible truth is now being revealed."

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He added, "Out of the 580,400 soldiers who served in GW1 (the first Gulf War), of them, 11,000 are now dead! By the year 2000, there were 325,000 on Permanent Medical Disability. This astounding number of 'Disabled Vets' means that a decade later, 56% of those soldiers who served have some form of permanent medical problems!" The disability rate for the wars of the last century was 5 percent; it was higher, 10 percent, in Viet Nam.

"The VA Secretary (Principi) was aware of this fact as far back as 2000," wrote Bernklau. "He, and the Bush administration have been hiding these facts, but now, thanks to Moret's report, (it) ... is far too big to hide or to cover up!"

"Terry Jamison, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Department of Veterans Affairs, at the VA Central Office, recently reported that 'Gulf Era Veterans' now on medical disability, since 1991, number 518,739 Veterans," said Berklaue.

"The long-term effects have revealed that DU (uranium oxide) is a virtual death sentence," stated Berklaue. "Marion Fulk, a nuclear physical chemist, who retired from the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab, and was also involved with the Manhattan Project, interprets the new and rapid malignancies in the soldiers (from the 2003 Iraq War) as 'spectacular ... and a matter of concern!'"

When asked if the main purpose of using DU was for "destroying things and killing people," Fulk was more specific: "I would say it is the perfect weapon for killing lots of people!"

Principi could not be reached for comment prior to deadline.

References

1. Depleted uranium: "Dirty bombs, dirty missiles, dirty bullets: A death sentence here and abroad" by Leuren Moret, <http://www.sfbayview.com/081804/Depleteduranium081804.shtml>.
2. Veterans for Constitutional Law, 112 Jefferson Ave., Port Jefferson NY 11777, Arthur N. Bernklau, executive director, (516) 474-4261, fax 516-474-1968.
3. Preventive Psychiatry E-Newsletter. Email Gary Kohls, gkohls@cpinternet.com, with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

Email Bob Nichols at bobnichols@cox.net.



Hole in Ozone May Stay Longer Than Expected

With banned chemicals still being released into the Earth's atmosphere, scientists say the layer's recovery may take two decades more, till 2065.

By Usha Lee McFarling

Times Staff Writer

December 7, 2005

http://www.latimes.com/news/science/la-na-ozone7dec07,1,872940,print_story?coll=la-news-science&ctrack=1&cset=true

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SAN FRANCISCO — The ozone hole over Antarctica may persist two decades longer than predicted, until 2065, because ozone-destroying chemicals are still being released by developed nations a decade after their production and importation was banned.

The Montreal Protocol, ratified in 1987, banned the creation of chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, used as coolant by developed nations. It followed the discovery that such chemicals ripped apart ozone molecules and severely thinned the layer of ozone that sits about 20 miles above the Earth's surface and shields the planet from ultraviolet radiation that causes cancer and cataracts and can harm wildlife.

Developing countries have been allowed to continue using the chemicals for several decades to avoid the higher cost of replacement chemicals. Scientists had predicted that the phasing out of the chemicals by developed nations would allow the ozone hole over Antarctica to recover by 2040 or 2050.

But measurements taken in 2003 and released Tuesday showed that emissions of the chemicals from the United States and Canada made up about 15% of the world total even though the nations are no longer allowed to produce the compounds, said Dale Hurst, an atmospheric chemist from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who made the measurements.

He estimated that developed countries accounted for about half of the world's total.

"These fractions are surprisingly high," Hurst said at a briefing on the issue held in San Francisco at the American Geophysical Union's meeting of 11,000 earth scientists. "We would have expected them to be exhausted by 2003."

Hurst said he believed the compounds were not new ones, but left over from old fire extinguishers, refrigerators and air-conditioning systems that were created before the ban went into effect but are being legally recycled and slowly leaking chemicals into the atmosphere.

Hurst said in an interview that he doubted there was much illicit production of two key CFCs in the U.S. or Canada because his measurements showed no traces of a chemical used in their production.

The overall rates of two major ozone-destroying chemicals, chlorine and bromine, peaked in 2002 and were now in decline, he said.

But scientists greatly underestimated the amount of already-produced chemicals that remained and were still in use, Hurst said.

The ozone hole over the Antarctic is now not expected to recover until 2065, said John Austin, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration scientist who runs computer models of how the ozone layer will respond in the future.

The ozone hole over Antarctica was detected 20 years ago. This year's hole was one of the largest recorded: 9.4 million square miles, about the size of North America. In

1998, the hole was 10.1 million square miles, according to NASA, and was similarly large in 2000 and 2003. Before 1985, the ozone hole measured less than 4 million square miles.

Hurst 's measurements taken by low-flying aircraft of ozone-destroying chemicals near the planet's surface have been confirmed by satellite, said Michelle Santee, an atmospheric scientist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Total levels of chlorine in the stratosphere have declined in recent years, but they are still five times as high as natural levels, she said. In addition, the particular chlorine molecule that destroys ozone — chlorine oxide — is still forming in high amounts during winter months over the Antarctic.

"As a result, the ozone has been eaten away," Santee said.

Some of the chemicals involved persist for 100 years and can continually tear apart ozone through chemical reactions, she said.

The latest measurements will be used to create a scientific assessment of ozone depletion that will be given in 2007 to the signers of the Montreal Protocol and could be used to make changes in the treaty, said John Newman, a physicist and ozone expert at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md.

"There will be a new look at these chemicals," Newman said. But he added that because the compounds were already regulated, "I'm not sure there's a lot we can do."

CFCs are allowed to be recycled. Moving them from one place to another allows some of the chemicals to leak out. But the alternative to recycling would be to vent them to the atmosphere all at once, which would raise levels more suddenly, the scientists said.

Another compound, called methyl bromide, is used as a fumigant in agriculture and importation and is exempt from the Montreal Protocol because no sufficient replacement has been found, Hurst said. That compound is 45 to 60 times more effective at depleting ozone than CFCs are. But it persists for only eight months in the atmosphere, so it may not prove to be as much of a long-term problem for ozone, Hurst said.

The trends are the same for thinning ozone at the North Pole, but the problem there is not as severe because the area doesn't consistently experience the extremely cold conditions needed for the ozone-depleting forms of chlorine to be created. Winds around the North Pole are also stronger and tend to blow ozone back into areas that have been thinned.

Austin 's models show that the ozone layer over the Arctic should recover between 2030 and 2040, but he said his estimates were more uncertain there than for the Antarctic because of weather patterns and long-term atmospheric patterns that could alter ozone levels in unpredictable ways.



[For a remarkable set of accompanying graphs, see the version of this article at [Energy Bulletin](#). – FTW]

IEA: Stupid, Manipulative or Corrupt?

Rechsteiner-Basel.ch

December 15, 2005

By Rudolf Rechsteiner, MP Switzerland

<http://www.energybulletin.net/print.php?id=11701>

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When Parliaments decide on energy policy, they normally start with proposals from the government. Governments like to swim in the mainstream – and they get information and advice from so called experts of organizations such as the International Energy Agency (IEA) or the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

But up to now you barely find an international body who is in favour of renewables. Why is this so?

The International Energy Agency IEA is a world champion in wrong predictions, and their scenarios do not fit reality. Let's take a closer look at the World Energy Outlook (WEO), a bi-annual publication of IEA:

The methodology of the IEA for oil and oil price prediction was revealed in the 2002 edition of WEO, page 95: "The oil supply projections of this Outlook are derived from aggregated projections of oil demand....Opec conventional oil production is assumed to fill the gap."

In the 2005 WEO the methodology was slightly modified, leading to almost identical results, though. The idea of IEA still is that you find any amount of oil in the Middle East, dependent only on investment cost, which will need to rise to \$17 trillion from 2004-2030.

One could take this to mean that the necessary high investments would lead to higher prices in the oil sector. But not so in the IEA perspective. Despite high investments, oil prices are expected to follow a deep fall, soon, and to stay low for decades — so we are told in the 2005 outlook: Oil at \$35 a barrel and gas at \$6 per MBtu.

But how much of this is factual? Despite a steep rise of oil prices, the IEA oil and renewables projections in 2005 are almost the same as in former years. The IEA omits the crucial questions:

- How much will the prices rise in case that oil has peaked and you will not find more than now or maybe less?
- How much must they rise to stabilize or destruct demand?
- What efficiency technologies will emerge if oil rises above \$100 as predicted in a Goldman Sachs report?
- And what renewable technology will be a good bargain with such prices?

Prices are different from what IEA reports. Oil is around \$60 a barrel and natural gas tends to follow oil, as can be seen every day in the US and in Europe. The IEA reports are similar to the Soviet planning fulfillment reports, and this reminds me the famous sentence by Michail Gorbachev: "The numbers were always good".

Yes IEA numbers sound good, but it is fantasy! IEA is making up things which do not exist, and like in the Soviet Union, people might starve if they do not act, investing in efficiency and renewables for example. IEA is totally unwilling to learn, to give transparency or to adopt tested methods of oil reserve and price assumptions. The objective of this wrong reserve reporting and wrong price prediction is obvious:

- Parliaments and investors should be distracted from renewables as long as possible.

- The supposed low (and stable) oil and gas prices, and prices not corrected by externalities, renewables should stay in the cost trap for ever, they cannot advance and will not get cheaper than conventional energies.
- Only wind power in some best sites might be competitive with gas, this is the IEA message.

Fortunately – and this is the second good news – IEA is not only plain wrong on fossil fuel prices, but on renewables too. Let me show this for the case of wind power...

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*The above is a summary of a parts of a speech given by Rudolf Rechensteiner, Swiss MP entitled 'How to Create Majorities in a Hostile Environment' given at the World Assembly on Renewable Energy at the World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE) in Bonn, 27. November 2005. For the the fully referenced report based on the speech please [download the PDF](#) from his website.*



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*[Better late than never. But still DOE distorts. Remember that it was the DOE's Energy Information Administration that stuck in an obscure footnote stating that they adjusted their reserve estimates "based upon anticipated demand." What kind of trustworthy reporting is that? Peak Oil is getting harder and harder to deny and the excuses pretending it's not there are getting wackier and wackier. This admission sounds a little bit like an old song from the 60s, "Too much, too little, too late." – MCR]*

## **Energy Department: \$50-plus oil here to stay**

### **High crude prices seen boosting fuel-efficient cars, alternative energy**

Dec. 12, 2005

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10437549/from/RSS/>

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WASHINGTON - Oil prices are projected to remain well above \$50 a barrel for years to come, resulting in a greater shift to more fuel efficient cars and alternative energy sources, according to an analysis released Monday by the Energy Department.

The analysis reflected a sharp change from the department's projections a year ago when it predicted oil prices in constant dollars - not counting normal inflation - would decline to \$31 a barrel by 2025.

The report, issued Monday by the department's Energy Information Administration, now projects oil will cost an average \$54 a barrel in 2025 and \$57 a barrel in 2030 before inflation. Currently, crude oil prices have been hovering around \$60 a barrel, briefly soaring as high as \$70 earlier this year.

The EIA report, however, projected that natural gas prices, which have soared to more than \$14 per thousand cubic feet in recent weeks, would retreat and return to below \$5 a thousand cubic feet in the years ahead. It projected a likely price of \$4.46 per thousand cubic feet in 2016 as demand for the fuel eases and supplies increase.

But the agency said domestic gas production even as far out as 2025 is expected to

be slightly less than projected a year ago, because of the long-term impact from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The hurricanes shut down Gulf of Mexico gas production and full operation is not expected until next summer. The impact of the hurricanes is "expected to delay offshore drilling projects because of a lack of rigs and ... have a long-term effect on production levels," said the report.

The agency said it added about \$21 to the future price of a barrel of crude because it does not expect OPEC oil producers to pump as much as oil as previously projected. Consequently, world oil supplies are presumed to remain tight over the next several decades.

Global oil demand, currently about 82 million barrels a day, is projected to grow to 111 million barrels a day by 2025, according to the EIA report. It said OPEC production is now likely to be about 11 million barrels a day less than what the EIA projected in its 2005 report.

With high oil prices a long-term fixture, there will be more domestic crude oil production, increased demand for unconventional transportation fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel and greater use of more fuel efficient hybrid gasoline-electric cars and trucks, the EIA said.

The EIA's long-term energy outlook report also:

- Scaled back the expected growth of liquefied natural gas imports into the United States. It said an increase of worldwide demand for LNG will reduce the amount coming into U.S. facilities.
- Projected a 9 percent growth in electricity production from nuclear power plants with a half-dozen new reactors likely to be built some time after 2014. Last year's report said no new reactors were on the horizon.
- Said that coal would remain the primary fuel for producing electricity through 2030.
- Predicted that despite higher oil costs and some increases in efficiency, U.S. energy demand would increase by 1.1 percent a year between now and 2030.
- Forecast that heat-trapping carbon dioxide releases into the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels will increase an average of 1.2 percent a year and reach 7,587 million metric tons by 2025, a 28 percent increase over the amount released in 2004.

Carbon dioxide is the leading so-called "greenhouse" gas that many scientists believe will cause a significant warming of the earth over the next century if atmospheric concentrations continue to increase.

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## Russia to Cut Off Gas Supplies to Ukraine

By MIKE ECKEL, Associated Press Writer

Dec 13, 3:44 PM ET

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051213/ap\\_on\\_bi\\_ge/russia\\_ukraine\\_gas\\_2](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051213/ap_on_bi_ge/russia_ukraine_gas_2)

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Russia will cut off natural-gas supplies to Ukraine if no compromise is reached by Jan. 1 in a dispute over prices, officials with Russia's state-run gas monopoly said

Tuesday, markedly raising the stakes in the increasingly acrimonious dispute.

Gas giant Gazprom also gave a tough rebuttal to Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's proposal that price hikes for Russian gas supplies be gradually implemented. Moscow has proposed tripling its gas prices immediately.

In an interview with the Kremlin-backed satellite TV channel Russia Today, Gazprom Chief Executive Officer Alexei Miller said time was running out for reaching a new contract with Ukraine.

"If no compromise over Russian gas supplies to Ukraine is found before the New Year, the supplies will be stopped," Miller said, according to Russia Today.

About 80 percent of the natural gas Russia exports to Europe passes through Ukraine, which gets almost half of its gas imports from Russia.

"If we don't have a contract (with Ukraine) then all the gas in the pipe goes to European consumers," Gazprom spokesman Sergei Kuprianov said in comments on Ekho Moskvu radio.

"We want to avoid this situation, but we are preparing for a negative development," Kuprianov said.

Ukraine 's state-run gas company Naftogaz Ukraina refused to comment. Ukraine's Fuel and Energy Minister Eduard Zanyuk was traveling in the gas-rich Central Asian nation of Turkmenistan and could not be located for comment.

Russia has proposed more than tripling the price it charges Ukraine for gas from the current \$50 per 1,000 cubic meters. Ukraine has rejected the proposal, saying it would undermine the nation's industry.

A drastic spike in gas prices would also hit homeowners hard, since most apartments and residences in the poor former Soviet nation rely on gas for heating and cooking.

On Monday, Yushchenko promised that his country would guarantee Russian natural gas deliveries to Europe, and proposed an agreement whereby Ukraine would shift gradually to paying market prices for Russian gas.

Kuprianov said, however, in comments on state-run television that the proposal was "absolutely unacceptable." Such an arrangement could stretch the process over several years, he said. Negotiations that stretched late into the night Monday ended unsuccessfully, he said: "The talks ended with nothing."

Russian President Vladimir Putin struck a hard line last week, saying Ukraine's economy had seen fast growth this year and the government in Kiev had received substantial privatization revenues and Western loans.

Against the backdrop of its disagreements with Kiev, Russia has also pushed for alternate pipeline routes to supply gas to Europe.

Last week, Russian and German dignitaries marked the symbolic beginning for a pipeline that is to stretch along the Baltic seabed to Germany, allowing Russia to bypass the Ukrainian pipeline routes, as well as another that goes through Poland and Belarus.



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