QUESTION 11. WHAT DOES THE U.S. GOVT. KNOW ABOUT DU?
November 25, 2003
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1943 – MANHATTAN PROJECT: Memo to General Leslie R. Groves October 30, 1943 - Blueprint for Depleted Uranium weapons
Recommendation from Manhattan Project physicists (Compton, Urey, Connant) to develop radioactive battlefield weapons “which would behave like a radioactive gas” using nuclear trash from the atomic bomb program in order to beat the Germans who might do it first. Depleted uranium was specifically mentioned in other communications. http://www.mindfully.org/Nucs/Groves-Memo-Manhattan30oct43.htm

1946 – OPEN LITERATURE
ACTIONS OF RADIATIONS ON LIVING CELLS by D.E. Lea, Cambridge University Press (1946) (includes early research beginning in 1927 by H.J. Muller on genetic mutations in Drosophila from ionizing radiation); through collaboration with the Radiological Society of North America, the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, and the Royal Society.

1950 – U.S. ARMY Pamphlet: THE EFFECTS OF ATOMIC WEAPONS
9.40 “…The uranium and plutonium which may have escaped fission in the nuclear weapon represent a further possible source of residual nuclear radiation…”
9.41 “The alpha particles from uranium and plutonium… are completely absorbed in an inch or two of air…. indicates that uranium and plutonium deposited on the earth do not represent a serious external hazard.”
9.42 “Although there is negligible danger from uranium and plutonium outside the body, it is possible for dangerous amounts of these elements to enter the body through the lungs, the digestive system, or breaks in the skin. Plutonium, for example, tends to concentrate in bone and lungs, where the prolonged action of the alpha particles can cause serious harm.”

Major research on military use of depleted uranium, 1974-1999, Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses – “GulfLINK”
These summaries represent extensive research to test and characterize depleted uranium as a military weapon. The summaries confirm everything that was known in 1943 in the Groves Memo.

Judge Advocate General Activities Air Force Pamphlet AFP 110-31


This Air Force manual acknowledges that the Department of the Air Force must adhere to international and U.S. military law regarding bombardment and air operations.

“It is especially important that treaties, having the force of law equal to laws enacted by the Congress of the United States, be scrupulously adhered to by the United States armed forces.” This is the legal policy of the U.S. Department of Defense. (USAF manual, p. 1-7)

Article VI of the Constitution of the United States says: “…all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or the laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.”


Even without a formal declaration of war, the United States Department of Defense is legally obligated under the U.S. Constitution to obey the laws of war. “The law of armed conflict applies to an international armed conflict regardless of whether a declared ‘war’ exists.” (USAF manual, p. 1-10) “The Armed Forces of the United States will comply with the law of war in the conduct of military operations and related activities in armed conflict however such conflicts are characterized.” (USAF manual, p. 1-8)

Although uranium weapons are not banned by name in an existent treaty, they are illegal under binding Air Force law and international conventions. “Any weapon may be put to an unlawful use.” (USAF manual, p. 6-1) “A weapon may be illegal per se if either international custom or treaty has forbidden its use under all circumstances. An example is poison to kill or injure a person.” (USAF manual, p. 6-1) The International Court of Justice recognizes this rule in its Advisory Opinion, “Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons” (International Court of Justice Reports, 1996). In paragraph 87 of that Opinion, the Court found that the principles and rules of humanitarian law apply to all weapons, including nuclear ones. In other parts of the Opinion the Court stresses the duty to evaluate legality or illegality prior to use in military operations.

The Geneva Gas Protocol prohibits, “the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices.” (USAF manual, p.6-3, 6-4) The Geneva Conventions now include the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Protocol Additional I, and Protocol Additional II. [The two protocols strongly set out prohibitions of military operations...
that would unleash hazardous forces (such as an attack on a nuclear power facility or a dam) or would damage the natural environment or water supply.

The 1907 Hague Convention IV, at Section II, Article 23, absolutely forbids any use of poison. It states: “In addition to the prohibitions provided by special Conventions, it is especially forbidden — a) To employ poison or poisoned weapons; b) To kill or wound treacherously individuals belonging to the hostile nation army; e) To employ arms, projectiles, or material calculated to cause unnecessary suffering.” (USAF manual, p.5-1)

Poison is defined in the Air Force manual in a way that clearly describes uranium munitions: “Poisons are biological or chemical substances causing death or disability with permanent effects when, in even small quantities, they are ingested, enter the lungs or bloodstream, or through the skin. The longstanding customary prohibition against poison is based on their uncontrolled character and the inevitability of death or permanent disability as well as on a traditional belief that it is treacherous to use poison.” (USAF manual, p. 6-5)

“U.S. Air Force and International Law Forbid the Use of Uranium Weapons” by Karen Parker, J.D., Diplome (Strasbourg) and Piotr Bein, PhD.

Source: John LaForge, Nukewatch http://www.nukewatch.com/

1978 - 95th CONGRESS AND U.S. PRESIDENT – Speech by Senator Bob Dole

Making Bullets Out of Depleted Uranium - Mr. Dole: “Mr. President, an article appeared in the Washington Star on March 14 [1978], reporting that the Pentagon is about to start using depleted-uranium to produce bullets. They seem to have chosen this material for bullets because uranium metal is dense, and because depleted uranium is cheap. Needless to say, I find this proposal shocking. On the one hand this shows a complete lack of sensitivity to the general fear of using radioactive materials. On the other hand, only a strange set of policy decisions could have made this material so cheap that anybody would consider using it for bullets.”


1979 - U.S. ARMY: Mobility Equipment, Research & Development Command

The U.S. Army Mobility Equipment, Research & Development Command, March 7, 1979, states: “Not only the people in the immediate vicinity (emergency and fire fighting personnel) but also people at distances downwind from the fire are faced with potential over exposure to airborne uranium dust.”


“The Ballistics Research Laboratory, a component of the U.S. Army Research and Development Command, contracted with Pacific Northwest Laboratory (PNL) to provide a prototype air cleaning system for a new large caliber firing range where depleted uranium munitions are testfired. …too costly to operate… rapid particle loading results in short filter life necessitating frequent replacement and disposal as low-level radioactive
waste. The rapid particle loading also results in decreased airflow causing an excessive waiting period before personnel can reenter the target area."

“The U.S. Army Material Test Directorate (MTD) and the Ballistics Research Laboratory (BRL) both operate two firing ranges (Ranges A, B, and C, D respectively) for the testing of large caliber depleted uranium (DU) penetrators. The targets are housed in enclosures which contain DU aerosols and fragments produced by the test firings. One of the drawbacks of using a target enclosure is that the airborne DU must be removed by ventilation and air cleaning before personnel can enter the enclosure without respiratory protection.”

1989 - U.S. NAVY - Changes from Depleted Uranium to Tungsten Alloys

“The interesting aspect in the history of this application is that after deciding in 1978 to use a uranium alloy, the U.S. Navy decided in 1989 to change to tungsten alloys, ‘based on live fire tests showing that tungsten met their performance requirements while offering reduced probabilities of radiation exposure and environmental impact’.”


“Depleted uranium (DU) material can constitute a heavy metal poisoning and radiation poisoning hazard in the pulverized (powder) state only if it is either ingested or inhaled.”


1990 – SAIC: Government Contractor

“Short-term effects of high doses can result in death, while long-term effects of low doses have been implicated in cancer.”

“Aerosol DU exposures to soldiers on the battlefield could be significant with potential radiological and toxicological effects.”

From the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) report, included as Appendix D of AMMCOM’s Kinetic Energy Penetrator Long Term Strategic Study, Danesi, July 1990. This report was completed six months before Desert Storm.

1990 - U.S. ARMY - Armament, Munitions and Chemical Command [AMCCOM]

“…reported in July 1990, that depleted uranium is a “low level alpha radiation emitter which is linked to cancer when exposures are internal, [and] chemical toxicity causing kidney damage.” (AMCCOM’s radiological task group has said that “long term effects of low doses [of DU] have been implicated in cancer…there is no dose so low that the probability of effect is zero.”

1991 – LOS ALAMOS MEMO - Los Alamos Nuclear Weapns Laboratory
SUBJECT: The Effectiveness of Depleted Uranium Penetrators    March 1, 1991
From: Lt. Col. M.V. Ziehm
To: Major Larson “Studies and Analysis Branch” (WR 13)

“There is a relatively small amount of lethality data for uranium penetrators, either the tank fired long version or the GAU-8 round fired from the A-10 close air support aircraft. The recent war has likely multiplied the number of DU rounds fired at targets by orders of magnitude. It is believed that DU penetrators were very effective against Iraqi armor; however, assessments of such will have to be made.

There has been and continues to be a concern regarding the impact of DU on the environment. Therefore, if no one makes a case for the effectiveness of DU on the battlefield, DU rounds may become politically unacceptable and thus, be deleted from the arsenal.

If DU penetrators proved their worth during our recent combat activities, then we should assure their future existence (until something better is developed) through Service/DoD proponency. If proponency is garnered, it is possible that we stand to lose a valuable combat capability.

I believe we should keep this sensitive issue at mind when after action reports are written.”

Los Alamos National Laboratory Memorandum  March 1, 1991
Source of this document: Major Doug Rokke, Head of Depleted Uranium Cleanup Project for Iraq and Kuwait after the Gulf War 1991.

1992 – UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND log - following a major fire at a depleted uranium ammunition storage facility in Doha

“EOD POC (point of contact) states that burning depleted uranium puts off alpha radiation. Uranium particles when breathed can be hazardous. 11ACR has been notified to treat the area as though it were a chemical hazard area; i.e. stay upwind and wear protective mask in the vicinity.”


1993 – U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO)

“Inhaled insoluble oxides stay in the lungs longer and pose a potential cancer risk due to radiation. Ingested DU dust can also pose both a radioactive and a toxicity risk.”


1993 – U.S. ARMY ARMAMENT, MUNITIONS, AND CHEMICAL COMMAND(AMCCOM)

“When a DU penetrator impacts a target surface, a large portion of the kinetic energy is dissipated as heat. The heat of the impact causes the DU to oxidize or burn momentarily. This results in smoke which contains high concentration of DU particles. These uranium particles can be ingested or inhaled and are toxic.”
U.S. ARMY ARMAMENT, MUNITIONS, AND CHEMICAL COMMAND (AMCCOM)


1993 - U.S. ARMY: Colonel Robert G. Claypool, Medical Corps Director, Professional Services of the Department of the Army, Office of the Surgeon General, August 16, 1993 letter to U.S. Army Chemical School

“When soldiers inhale or ingest DU dust, they incur a potential increase in cancer risk. The magnitude of that increase can be quantified (in terms of projected days of life lost) if the DU intake is known (or can be estimated). Expected physiological effects from exposure to DU dust include possible increased risk of cancer (lung or bone) and kidney damage.”


1993 - U.S. ARMY: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff For Operations and Plans, Washington D.C. August 19, 1993: Memorandum Thru Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans – Director Army Staff – for Assistant Secretary of the Army (Installation Logistics & Environment)
Subject: Review of Draft Report to Congress – Health and Environmental Consequences of Depleted Uranium in the U.S. Army – ACTION MEMORANDUM

[This was a response to a GAO report to Congress on DU issues]

c. “In response to the GAO report, the Deputy Secretary of Defense (DEPSECDEF) issued a tasking memorandum on 8 June 1993. The memorandum directs the Secretary of the Army to:
   (1) Provide adequate training for personnel who may come in contact with DU contaminated equipment.
   (2) Complete medical testing of personnel exposed to DU contamination during the Persian Gulf War.
   (3) Develop a plan for DU contaminated equipment recovery during future operations.”

Signed - Brigadier General Eric K. Shinseki

[The rest of the memorandum is in regard to implementation of this order.]

[General Shinseki served four years as the Army Chief of Staff and retired in June 2003 after two years of tension between him and Donald Rumsfeld over resources needed for the Iraq war.]


Subject: Medical Management Of Unusual Depleted Uranium Exposures
October 2, 1993

4. “Unusual exposures to DU are also expected to cause no medical problems. But in the interest of documenting the expected minimal exposures, the exposures should be documented and specimens taken. Unusual exposures include situations which could result in ingestion/inhalation of DU dust; or the contamination of wounds by DU dust or fragments. These unusual exposures could result from:
   A. Being in the midst of the smoke from DU fires resulting from the burning of vehicles uploaded with DU munitions or depots in which DU munitions are being stored.
   B. Working within environments containing DU dust or residues from DU fires.
   C. Being within a structure or vehicle while it is struck by a DU munition.

5. Safety guidance on appropriate soldier response to accidents involving DU is contained within reference A, and guidance on appropriate management of potentially DU-contaminated equipment is contained within reference B.

6. In cases such as those described in Paragraph 4, the following steps should be taken:
   A. A MED-16 report (RCS MED-15(R4)) should be submitted in accordance with Paragraph 5-10 of Reference B.
   B. Specimens should be collected and forwarded for analysis in conformance with the information provided in subsequent paragraphs and paragraph 9-6 of Reference A.
      (1) Nasal swipes could be collected… Nasal swipes can be useful if confirming exposure to DU dust environments…
      (2) Any filters used for respiratory protection (Protective mask canister, dust masks, field-expedient cloths placed over the nose etc.) should be sealed in plastic bags or other protective containers…
      (3) Twenty-four hour urine specimens should be collected…”


“If DU enters the body, it has the potential to generate ‘significant medical consequences’. The risks associated with DU in the body are both chemical and radiological.”

“The radiation dose to critical organs depends upon the amount of time that depleted uranium resides in the organs. When this value is known or estimated, cancer and hereditary risk estimates can be determined”

“Personnel inside or near vehicles struck by DU penetrators could receive significant internal exposures.”

“Very few remediation technologies have actually been used to clean up DU-contaminated sites.”

“No available technology can significantly change the inherent chemical and radiological toxicity of DU. These are intrinsic properties of uranium.”

“The Army should determine the full life-cycle cost of DU weapon systems. This analysis must take into account not only production costs, but also demilitarization, disposal and
recycling costs; facility decontamination costs; test range remediation costs; and long-
term health and environmental costs.”

“The only systematic DU contamination of Army land occurs during the research,
development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) cycle for DU ammunition.”

“The Army needs to review particle data from Army studies and elsewhere to determine
data gaps and conduct experiments to generate the requisite data to fill these gaps.”

“The Army needs to develop a better understanding of DU particles generated from
impacts or burning.”

“The Army should be prepared to provide guidance to other governments on the health
and safety risks associated with DU for affected battlefields. This guidance may include
information on environmental measurement, monitoring, migration and remediation
techniques.”

From the Army Environmental Policy Institute (AEPI), *Health and
Environmental Consequences of Depleted Uranium Use in the U.S. Army*, June
1995

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1997 - ARMED FORCES RADIOBIOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (AFRRI)

Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI) in Bethesda, Maryland has
discovered in animal studies that embedded DU, unlike most metals, dissolves and spreads
through the body depositing in organs like the spleen and the brain, and that a pregnant
female rat will pass DU along to a developing fetus.


1998 - UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC)

According to the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission guidelines for
occupational exposure, the 186,000,000 grams of depleted uranium released during the
Gulf War combat operations is enough to poison every American man, woman, and child
100 times.

1998, National Gulf War Resource Center, p. 3.

1998 - U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR/OSHA

Health Hazards Data, the Materials Safety Data Sheet from the U.S. Department of
Labor/OSHA, says this about depleted uranium: “Increased risk of lung carcinoma and
chemical toxicity to kidney. Hazardous decomposition products...”


2000 - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) has said, “One may normally expect that
depleted uranium contains a trace amount of plutonium.” In a January 20, 2000 letter,
DOE Assistant Secretary David Michaels formally admits that, “As background, I would
note that our historical information shows that recycled uranium, which came straight from
one of our production sites, e.g., Hanford, would routinely contain transuranics
[americium, neptunium, plutonium] at a very low level. … We have initiated a project to characterize the level of transuranics [americium, neptunium, plutonium] in the various depleted uranium inventories.”

David Michaels, PhD, MPH, Assistant Secretary Environment, Safety and Health, U.S. Department of Energy, letter, Jan. 20, 2000.)


During a speaking tour in the Eastern United States in January 2003 with Gulf War Veteran Major Doug Rokke, I was introduced to John Hanchette who in Doug’s words is “one of the good guys on the depleted uranium issue”. Mr. Hanchette told me that from 1991 to 2001, as Editor of U.S.A. TODAY, he published news breaking stories on the effects of depleted uranium on Gulf War Veterans. Each time he was ready to publish a story about devastating illnesses in Gulf War soldiers, he got a phone call from the Pentagon pressuring him not to print the story. He has been replaced as Editor at U.S.A. TODAY and is now teaching journalism to college students.


2003 – PENTAGON – U.S. Army Colonel

Journalist: “What about the health risks that are associated with D.U.? Or do you deny there are any?”

U.S. Army Colonel: “You are determined to get me to make a statement about the health risks aren’t you?”

Journalist: “If you will, I want to see what the behind the scenes view of D.U. is in the Pentagon.”

U.S. Army Colonel: “Well…….(long pause, followed by heavy profanity)…. Okay, I’ll give you some dirt if that’s what you’re looking for. The Pentagon knows there are huge health risks associated with D.U. They know from years of monitoring our own test ranges and manufacturing facilities. There were parts of Iraq designated as high contamination areas before we ever placed any troops on the ground. The areas around Basra, Jalibah, Talil, most of the southern desert, and various other hot spots were all identified as contaminated before the war. Some of the areas in the southern desert region along the Kuwaiti border are especially radioactive on scans and tests. One of our test ranges in Saudi Arabia shows over 1000 times the normal background level for radiation. We have test ranges in the U.S. that are extremely contaminated, hell they have been since the 80’s and nothing is ever said publicly. Don’t ask don’t tell is not only applied to gays, it is applied to this matter heavily. I know that at one time the theory was developed that any soldier exposed to D.U. shells should have to wear full MOP gear (the chemical protective suit). But they realized that it just wouldn’t be practical and it was never openly discussed again.”

Journalist: “So the stories that they know D.U. is harmful are true?”

U.S. Army Colonel: “Yes, there is no doubt that most high level commanders who were around during the 80’s know about it.”
2003  -  SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES - is a U.S. Nuclear Weapons Lab
Funding provided by the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of
Biological and Environmental Research, and Sandia’s Laboratory Directed
Research and Development.

“Sandia nanolaser may help extend life-spans by rapidly analyzing possible
neuroprotectant drugs” by Neal Singer

“Helping Gulf War victims” – Sandia has been doing research on the role of
mitochondria malfunctions identified as the most immediate cause of
Parkinson’s, Huntington’s, and Alzheimer’s. Loss of brain function is caused by
neurons killed by malfunctions in the mitochondria. “Malfunctioning
mitochondria have also been linked to battlefield aftereffects caused by radiation
or by nerve agents like sarin.” Gulf War victims frequently develop Lou
Gehrig’s disease or “ALS (the neuron disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis)
which is a neurodegenerative disorder that kills motor neurons causing paralysis
and death in three years.” It affects both Gulf War veterans and civilians.
Funding is now being requested from the U.S. Congress for research “to
help Gulf War victims”.

SandiaLabNews Vol. 55, No. 19,  September 19, 2003
http://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN09-19-03/key09-19-03_stories.html#nano

[AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT U.S. GOVT. ADMISSION THAT CANCER AND BIRTH
DEFECTS ARE NOT THE ONLY DISEASES CAUSED BY RADIATION EXPOSURE.]

2003  -  MEDIA:  WHITE HOUSE/PENTAGON CONTROLLING THE NEWS
TBRNews.com

During the middle of March, 2003, tbrnews received an email from a man who
claimed to be a mid-level executive with a major American television network.
He stated in this, and subsequent, emails that he was in possession of
“thousands” of pages of in-house memos sent from his corporate headquarters in
New York City to the head of the network’s television news department. He
went on to say that these memos set forth directives about what material was,
and was not, to be aired on the various outlets of the network.

This individual claimed he was developing serious doubts about the strict
control of media events and decided that he would pass this material along to
someone who might make use of it… All are on corporate stationary, signed or
initialed by the senders and again, signed or initialed by the recipients in the
news division…

If these memos were true, they showed with a terrible clarity that at least one
part of the American mass media was strictly controlled and that the news was
so doctored and spun that it might as well be official news releases from the
White House and Pentagon:

(Sept 28) There is to be nothing said about the high levels of radiation in Iraq.
Depleted uranium is the culprit but if it becomes too widespread, it is to be
blamed on Saddam’s “hidden A-bomb arsenal”! Our man in the Pentagon was moaning that when GIs start losing their hair and fingers in a few years, there will be more lawsuits. As they say in the military, “not on my watch, Charlie!”

(Nov 17) the Supreme Court is busting Bush’s balls now. They are going to take cases about the Gitmo [Guantanamo] gulag and the White House is shrieking with rage. I guess the Court doesn’t realize that Bush thinks he is the one to decide what is constitutional and not the Court. He has a rude surprise coming very soon as I understand…

To read more than 1400 memos since February 2003 with daily updates go to http://www.tbrnews.org/index.htm.