

US Nuclear Weapons Of Mass Hypocrisy

Report compiled by John Morris

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The United States government maintains that one of its aims is to disarm Iraq's nuclear capabilities. This is despite the UNSCOM post 1991 report stating that Iraq's nuclear facilities had been dismantled. Completing the hypocrisy is that the US is the only power on earth to have ever used nuclear weapons and which continues to employ nuclear weapons regularly to date.

The two bombs dropped on Japan were horrific and unnecessary, given that Japan had already agreed to a partial surrender. The US wanted to expand its influence over the Pacific and redevelop Japanese post-war manufacturing in its own image, so would not accept any Japanese surrender conditions.

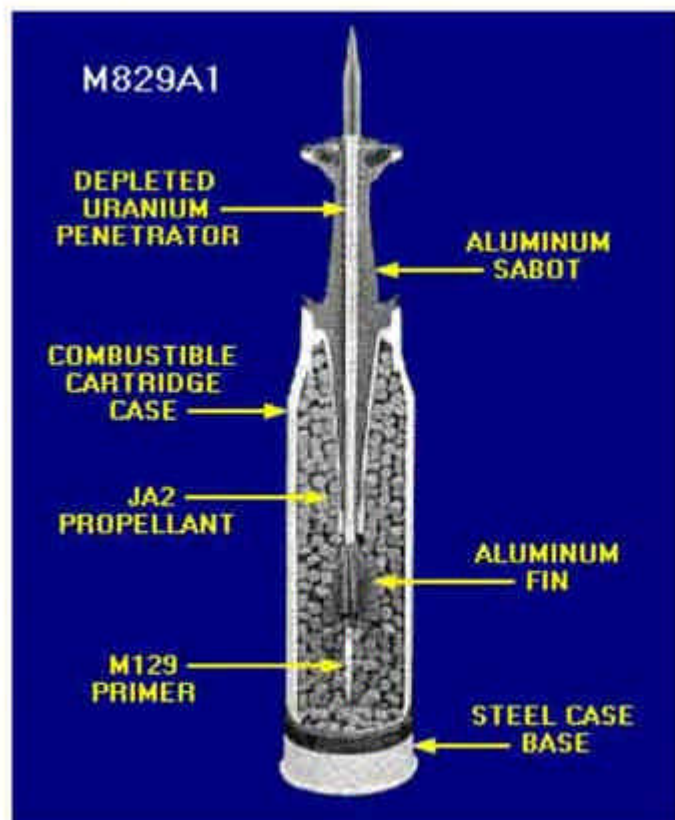
Most people would say that was the last and only use of nuclear weapons. But the US has since the Gulf War of 1991 incorporated the use of nuclear weapons as a key part of its military engagement. The use of DU or depleted uranium in tank and cannon fire shells occurred in the Gulf War, the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts as well as in Afghanistan.

The immediate effects of these shells are like a firestorm of lightning on their immediate human victims and structures. While this is isolated and of an insignificant level compared to a nuclear bomb, the dust, fragments and smoke from the explosions pollute the surrounding environment and survivors with radiation in the same way as for a conventional atomic weapon. Troops friend or foe, non-combatants and animals and plants will all be exposed alike.

This effect is viewed as a significant contribution to the "Gulf War Syndrome" of diseases affecting 1 in 8 American veterans of the previous Gulf War. Other causes could be the anti-anthrax and other injections given to troops – the kind of injections which some Australian Navy personnel have refused.

The US hypocrisy extends beyond not only employing these weapons on its enemies, but to deny the effect on its own troops. The military admits the existence of "Gulf War Syndrome" but refuses to admit a link to the use of DU. Australian troops have also demonstrated "Gulf War Syndrome".

Esemplare di munizione in dotazione a carri armati



DEPLETED URANIUM PENETRATOR=Penetratore ad Uranio impoverito

DEPLETED URANIUM SHELL – note minimal insulation of radioactive core

However this picture of a DU tank shell shows that the radioactive depleted uranium core is insulated by only a thin slice of aluminium. Troops handling these weapons will be irradiated as a matter of course.

The use of these weapons has become a campaign focus for US returned soldier organisation. The width of opposition includes Scott Ritter the prominent former weapons inspector and Ramsey Clark, a former US Attorney General. Ramsey Clark's statement, from the Bosnian war period in 1994, is reprinted here.

An International Appeal to Ban the Use of Depleted Uranium Weapons

Ramsey Clark, former US Attorney General

Depleted-uranium weapons are an unacceptable threat to life, a violation of international law and an assault on human dignity. To safeguard the future of humanity, we call for an unconditional international ban forbidding research, manufacture, testing, transportation, possession and use of DU for military purposes. In addition, we call for the immediate isolation and containment of all DU weapons and waste, the reclassification of DU as a radioactive and hazardous substance, the cleanup of existing DU-contaminated areas, comprehensive efforts to prevent human exposure and medical care for those who have been exposed.

During the Gulf War, munitions and armour made with depleted uranium were used for the first time in a military action. Iraq and northern Kuwait were a virtual testing range for depleted-uranium weapons. Over 940,000 30-millimeter uranium tipped bullets and "more than 14,000 large calibre DU rounds were consumed during Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield." (*U.S. Army Environmental Policy Institute*)

These weapons were used throughout Iraq with no concern for the health and environmental consequences of their use. Between 300 and 800 tons of DU particles and dust have been scattered over the ground and the water in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people, both civilians and soldiers, have suffered the effects of exposure to these radioactive weapons.

Of the 697,000 U.S. troops who served in the Gulf, over 90,000 have reported medical problems. Symptoms include respiratory, liver and kidney dysfunction, memory loss, headaches, fever, low blood pressure. There are birth defects among their newborn children. DU is a leading suspect for a portion of these ailments. The effects on the population living in Iraq are far greater. Under pressure, the Pentagon has been forced to acknowledge Gulf War Syndrome, but they are still stonewalling any connection to DU.

Communities near DU weapons plants, testing facilities, bases and arsenals have also been exposed to this radioactive material which has a half-life of 4.4 billion years. DU-weapons are deployed with U.S. troops in Bosnia. The spreading toxicity of depleted uranium threatens life everywhere.

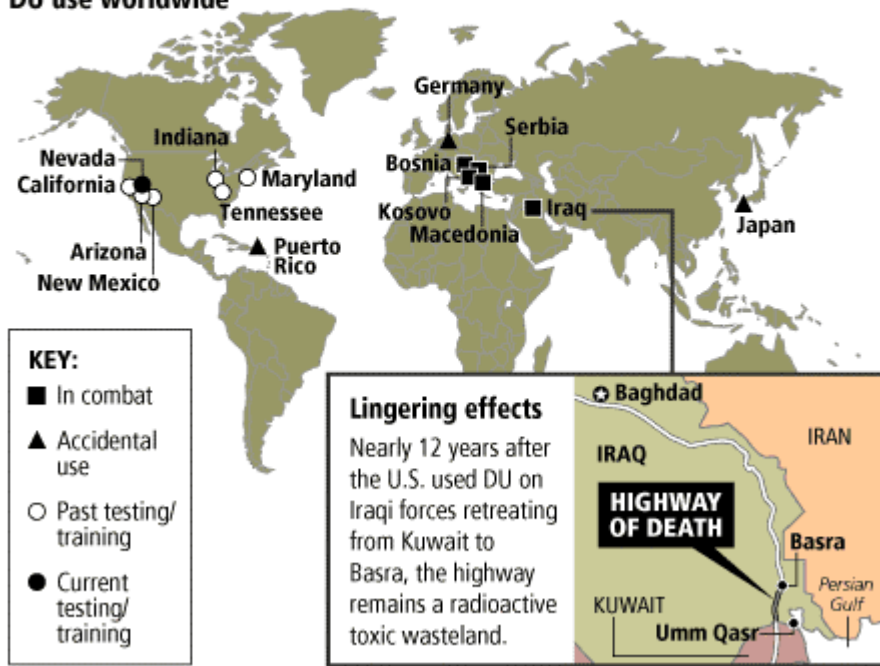
DU weapons are not conventional weapons. They are highly toxic, radioactive weapons. All international law on warfare has attempted to limit violence to combatants and to prevent the use of cruel and unfocused weapons. International agreements and conventions have tried to protect civilians and non-combatants from the scourge of war and to outlaw the destruction of the environment and the food supply in order to safeguard life on earth.

Consequently, DU weapons violate international law because of their inherent cruelty and unconfined death-dealing effect. They threaten civilian populations now and for generations to come. These are precisely the weapons and uses prohibited by international law for more than a century including the Geneva Conventions and their Protocols Additional of 1977.

DEPLETED URANIUM

With another war in Iraq perhaps imminent, scientists and others are expressing concern that the side effects of depleted uranium (DU) munitions – still a major part of the U.S. arsenal – will result in serious illnesses or deaths to a new generation of U.S. soldiers as well as Iraqis.

DU use worldwide



Global Depleted Uranium Use And Effects



Use of Depleted Uranium Shells



Birth Defect In Iraq Child Caused By Depleted Uranium Radiation