



America's « Love Affair » With Nuclear and Radioactive Weapons

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The United States would have the world believe that it is in mortal danger should nations like Iran or North Korea obtain operationally effective nuclear weapons. We are told that there is a grave risk of these weapons being used against another nation and that the US (with the support of the “international community”) must confront these government, and if possible undermine and overthrow them. Why?

Since a nation has already used nuclear weapons against another state, ironically enough that nation being the United States itself, we already know the devastating effects of nuclear weapons. Besides the immense, indiscriminate initial blast, nuclear weapons also produce a persistent radioactive threat amid the fallout afterwards.

The fallout and the catastrophic effects it has on human health for years afterward make nuclear weapons particularly horrifying and abhorrent. The United States didn't drop only one nuclear bomb on another nation, Japan, it dropped two. The data collected in the aftermath of these attacks have helped form our collective fear of these weapons.

Ironically the US is using the fear its own nuclear warfare has created as leverage to wage still more war.

Depleted Uranium - All the Fallout, None of the Bang

But what if the catastrophic human health effects of fallout could be achieved without the immense, city-flattening initial explosion? What if you could use a weapon to induce long-term spikes in cancer and birth defects without the political ramifications of dropping a nuclear bomb on a population? Some readers may be tempted to cite “dirty bombs,” and they would be partially correct. But there is another correct answer. Depleted uranium or DU ammunition.

Depleted uranium is one of the densest materials munitions can be made out of. Because of their density, they are able to penetrate armor other rounds cannot. DU was initially conceived as an additional deterrence, a weapon of last resort in the event of a full-scale Soviet invasion of Western Europe during the Cold War.

Because of the overwhelming number of tanks the Soviet Union possessed, it was believed extraordinary measures would be needed to even the odds, even at the cost of radioactive contamination of the battlefield.

The catastrophic effects of littering the battlefield with contaminated ammunition possessing a half-life of several billion years was a risk NATO was willing to take to ensure the survival of Western Europe. How then, did this weapon of last resort become a weapon commonly used?

The first Gulf War in 1990, Operation Desert Storm, included the heavy use of this doomsday contingency. The International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) in their recent piece titled, "[The most toxic war in history" - 25 years later,](#)" would note:

This month marks the 25th anniversary of the start of Operation Desert Storm, the combat phase of the Gulf War. Precipitated by Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait in August 1990, the conflict was the first to see the widespread use of depleted uranium (DU) ammunition. US and UK forces subsequently acknowledged firing a combined 286,000kg of DU - the vast majority of which was fired by US Abrams and M60 tanks, and A10 and Harrier aircraft.

ICBUW would also note that the use of DU has impacted both soldiers who used the weapons as well as civilians trapped on or near battlefields they were used on.

[Latinos Health](#) included in one of their recent articles the following caption:

The Czech military is testing all of its soldiers that served in the Balkans for possible signs of Balkan Syndrome, an unexplained condition that is thought to be caused by depleted uranium used in NATO ammunition. Recent media reports claim that scientists have found evidence of Uranium 236 in blood samples from soldiers who served in the Gulf War, where depleted uranium ammunition was also used.

It should strike people as disturbing that the United States poses as the greatest advocate against weapons of mass destruction and a champion for preserving the lives and wellbeing of innocent people affected by war, all while using weapons of mass destruction, repeatedly, at the expense of innocent lives affected by their various wars.

DU has turned up in both Iraq wars, NATO's intervention in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. Courts around the world have ruled in favor on several cases regarding the effects of DU, including a British Gulf War veteran who became ill because of the radioactive weapons.

The BBC would report in their story, "[Gulf soldier wins pension fight,](#)" that:

A former soldier is believed to be the first veteran to win a war pension appeal after suffering depleted uranium poisoning during the first Gulf War.

A tribunal in Edinburgh found in favour of Kenny Duncan from Clackmannanshire who became ill after his service in the Middle East.

He had helped move tanks destroyed by shells containing depleted uranium.

One can only wonder how many nameless, faceless and voiceless civilians living on or near former battlefields have also been affected like Mr. Duncan from Clackmannanshire, who will never receive the assistance needed to recover from what America's indiscriminate and

unnecessary use of radiological weapons has done to them and their communities.

While it is hopeful seeing mounting awareness and subsequent pressure being applied to the United States and other governments around the world who might also consider using this weapon and others like it, we are still faced with the problem that the US, essentially the worst violator when it comes to nuclear and radiological weapons, poses as the primary advocate policing the world against them.

Not only is the US guilty of immense hypocrisy, it has managed to hijack what are supposed to be “international institutions” to help perpetrate this hypocrisy. This is yet another example of just how important it is to establish a true balance of global power through a multipolar system of sovereign nations, in place of the “international order” that currently exists, which sidesteps nation sovereignty and empowers global criminality rather than stopping it.

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