

An Interview With
MAJOR DOUG ROKKE, Ph.D
Former Director of the
U.S. Army Depleted Uranium Project

Interview
By W. Leon Smith

Major Doug Rokke, PhD, is a retired Army combat officer who served as the director of the U.S. Army Depleted Uranium Project at the start of Gulf War I. His job was to prepare soldiers for nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare. He was in charge of cleaning up American tanks hit by friendly-fired depleted uranium (DU) munitions as well as helping casualties contaminated with DU.

His own health has suffered from the effects of uranium poisoning. Reports indicate that he has 5,000 times the acceptable level of radiation in his body and that he suffers from reactive airway disease from DU.

Prior to deployment to the Persian Gulf, Dr. Rokke worked with the University of Illinois Physics Department and served in Vietnam. His PhD is in health physics. His original training was in forensic science. Today, he travels the globe informing people and

THE INTERVIEW

ICONOCLAST: How do you view depleted uranium?

ROKKE: DU...interesting nightmare.

ICONOCLAST: Actually, it's a lot more widespread and damaging worldwide than I had realized before talking to Leuren Moret.

ROKKE: Absolutely. The United States gave it to Israel. The first time it was used that I can document, for which I have the reports that I base my work on — it was 1973, during the Arab-Israeli conflict, and U.S. Army guys actually went on-site. We've got all the photographs, measurements. We've got trash medically, and equipment was trashed, so we know that for a fact.

And then we used it extensively, probably close to 375 tons — now this is solid uranium, not uranium plus explosives or casings, but solid uranium, the amount of munitions in Gulf War I. In '94 and '95 we used three tons in the Balkans, and I was specifically asked to write the clean-up procedures and emergency management

procedures for that for the Army. I've still got them. In December of '95 and January of '96, the U.S. Marines shot the hell out of Okinawa, Torishima Island. We didn't tell the Japanese for a year.

And then we used it getting ready for the Balkans in '99 down in Puerto Rico. When I found out about that, I tried to activate our Army emergency response team called Army Contaminated Equipment Recovery team. That's by the Army regulation 700-48 that I wrote that was adopted, accepted, and implemented.

The Army refused to do that. Then I tried to get medical care for them down there, and they refused to do that.

Then, on April 16 of '99, we got called up to the White House to meet with what's called Bill Clinton's Presidential Oversight Board and that was under Senator Warren Rudman and Navy Admiral Elmo Zumwalt. Our team met with them and told them we're going to see all these health effects in the Balkans. We were still trying to deal with health effects from Gulf War I. At that time, I still got all the emails, copies of all the letters sent.

They said we won't use it (DU) in the Balkans, and lo and behold, they were already using it. They used 30-40 tons in the Balkans in '99.

Since then, we've been shooting it up, as U.S. Congressman James McDermott from Seattle, Washington, has confirmed. The Coast Guard's been shooting it up in the Puget Sound, Chesapeake Bay, off the coast of Texas, every place.

ICONOCLAST: Why have they been doing that?

ROKKE: They're just crazy. They want to make sure their guns work. Real simple. They're crazy.

And, then, we came along with Gulf War II.

We started planning Gulf War II back in '95. That had nothing to do with 9/11 at all. Zero. Not a thing. What's real interesting, if you go to the actual 9-1-1 report, General Franks totally acknowledges in the report in his testimony, that, yeah, they took and dusted off the invasion plans for Iraq and implemented it, which everybody knows because all that stuff was based on lies. So, anyhow, we went into Afghanistan based on a Feb. 12, 1998, Congressional discussion to overthrow the Taliban because it wouldn't go along with the Unicol oil deal, so that's why that happened.

We probably dumped a thousand tons or more in Afghanistan, and God knows how many, thousand, two-thousand tons in Iraq, and we're still using it as we speak.

ICONOCLAST: You have no idea how much exactly?

ROKKE: Not really. Nobody can get a solid estimate. We do know from on-site measurements and videos and photographs, there's stuff laying all over the place.

We shot up water treatment facilities. I've got live video and photographs. Apartment buildings, tanks, everything just left there...kids climbing all over them.

Scott Peterson with the Christian Science Monitor reported it. The Japanese reported it. Ted Wayman who works for Uranium Medical Research Center went over there and measured it and reported it, not just took somebody's word for it, but went over and did the stuff.

Medical reports coming out of Iraq on birth defects probably two or three days ago are just catastrophic, much less what's happened to our own troops. It's just incredible because the U.S. Army had required since I issued the initial order back after the ground war in 1991 that medical care in the form of testing be provided to everybody that was exposed within 24-72 hours. Still not happening.

The government Department of Defense is trying to prevent information from getting out. They'll say thousands of people have been tested since '92. If you go to the local VA and pick up a brand new issue of the Gulf War Review, Vol. 13, No. 1, or you can get it online <www.va.gov>, go to page 12 of it. It states since 1992 only 270 people have ever been tested. (laughs). I can't get my own staff tested yet, 14 years after the fact.

ICONOCLAST: What do you know about the munitions?

ROKKE: There are two different types of DU rounds. We have the kinetic energy penetrator, and that's fired by an Abrams tank, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, and HN Warthog aircraft, the Navy Phalanx, and then the machine gun. Those are all basically gigantic darts of solid uranium, contaminated with all the other junk from DOE's facility down at Paducah, Oakridge, and Portsmouth where they make the stuff.

The Abrams tank round is a solid rod of uranium about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, 18 inches long. Each and every rod is over 10 pounds of solid uranium. The A-10 fires one that's three-quarters of solid uranium at 4,000 rounds a minute. The Bradley Fighting Vehicle, that's a chain gun that's pretty fast, too, fires thousands of rounds. Each and every one of those rounds is half a pound. Those are kinetic energy penetrators. The machine gun is a giant bullet, too.

Then we have submunition landmines. These are cluster bombs. The casing is uranium, DU, with high explosives inside. I mean it's the absolute perfect dirty bomb.

And then we have the bunker busters where you've got the uranium casing from the McAlester army ammunition plant. The guys got sick putting these things together just about six months ago. I mean, real sick, and they had to shut the line down.

ICONOCLAST: Where do they make these?

ROKKE: The DUs are made all over the place. I mean Aerojet ... we got health effects where they shut the whole thing down, up at Albany, New York. That was National Lead. They've got horrible effects all around Concord, Mass. where it's manufactured. 60 Minutes did a story back in 1981 about all the adverse health effects that were at the Aerojet facility in Tennessee. They make it up in Minneapolis at Twin Cities. I mean, all over the place. This stuff's a nightmare. When you get to Oakridge and Paducah and Portsmouth where they have this stuff, and the health effects around there are just legendary, with all the respiratories and the cancers and everything.

The best report that's out is called Discounted Casualties. It was written by a Japanese journalist who's an expert on Hiroshima, you know, the atomic bomb. Akira Tashiro was his name. You could just go online, and type Discounted Casualties, and pull the whole book up in English. Just read through it. There are interviews. Leuren Moret did the forward on it, and I talk about all my work as director of the DU Project when I was health physicist with the assessment team after Gulf War I.

You won't find hardly anything on the web. If you go to the Department of Defense website, and you put in the "Depleted Uranium Project" for which I was director, you won't find any of this stuff. You won't find any report on the depleted uranium assessment team from Gulf War I, and all the reports we did. It's just not there.

We had all these orders mandating medical care, going way back to day one. I issued the initial one and have a whole shitpot of medals. In '91, the commanding general issued the order to provide medical care for everybody, identifying those who needed it. It never happened.

And then General Shinseki, who is retired as the head Army general, issued the order himself Aug. 14, 1993, mandating medical care, thorough environmental clean-up and remediation, and education and training. As a consequence of that, as director of the DU Project, we developed all the regulations, environmental clean-up, all the training and education, videotapes to support it, and in September of 2002 General Shinseki signed Army regulation AR700-48 making it mandatory. But they just ignore it.

And then General Peake on April of last year issued the same order mandating medical care for everyone exposed. But they ain't doing it.

ICONOCLAST: Why won't they do it, if they received an order from the General?

ROKKE: They're above the law. They're just simply above the law.

ICONOCLAST: These guys issued the orders on behalf of the DOD, right?

ROKKE: They are the commanding generals of the DOD.

ICONOCLAST: If they issued the order, who has the authority to stop the orders?

ROKKE: Dickie Cheney. It stopped way up there because when you go through this, and you find they aren't complying with the order, not giving the medical care, they haven't told the truth, then you have to figure it out.

You've got Deputy Secretary of Defense Bill Winkenwerder who's in charge of all medical. He issued an order himself in 2003 to do it, but they don't do it.

If you come down the medical line, you've got Georgie Bush, Dickie Cheney, and then you come on down from that to Don Rumsfeld. Then you've got Bill Winkenwerder, then you've got Mike Kilpatrick, Department of Defense.

These guys are absolved from telling the truth or complying or doing anything like this. And the only one that's got the authority and knowledge and who's been there from day one who can do that stuff is Dickie Cheney.

Rumsfeld's new. Georgie Bush is new. He didn't have any clue what's going on until after his 2000 election. He called me and had me go up there and speak to the U.S. Senate on all this stuff. Real interested to get ushered into the U.S. Senate as keynote speaker for a Veterans Day breakfast. It's a fascinating experience. It's pretty neat.

But you have all this stuff happening, so you figure, but we continue to use it. It violates United Nations laws and regulations. It doesn't even pass common sense to take tons and tons of solid radioactive material and throw it in someone else's back yard, refusing to give medical care although it's been ordered, refusing to clean up the

environmental contamination, although it's required. And they keep getting away with it.

When you look at the commanding generals who can do this shit, although Shinseki signed off on the order, as the head of the Army, and Kirpatrick and Winkenwerder can get away without doing the medical care, who's got the authority above them that can do it? Well, Rumsfeld's an idiot. He's only been around a short while, and George Bush didn't know, so it points at Dickie Cheney, because when you figure Dickie Cheney back in '92, we got a directive sent down from a lady named Madeleine Albright, secretary of state, down through General Paul Greenberg to the U.S. Army corps research lab. We were ordered at that time to write a no-bid contract for Halliburton.

ICONOCLAST: Really?

ROKKE: Uh-huh. We did. And we did it, and they got it. You know, Brown and Root ... Halliburton. So we hired them, and they went over to Kuwait and pushed a whole bunch of junk into a big hole at one of the camps and then walked away.

Now they've had all the no-bid contracts, as everybody's heard about. How much money's been wasted and can't be accounted for? It's real easy. When you trace the whole thing, who was involved in the beginning to allow this stuff ... it all points to Dickie Cheney. I mean, just 100 percent. And then you still have all the generals who knew what was going on, and they've never done anything.

ICONOCLAST: Why would Dick Cheney want there to be —

ROKKE: Money. Money. Money. Money. Money.

ICONOCLAST: Is DU cheaper to produce or something?

ROKKE: Yeah. It's free. You have to understand, this is an incredible weapon. It kills and destroys everything. I mean, it's absolutely incredible. When I had to clean up the mess following Gulf War I, I learned how good this stuff was. There's no two ways about it. It's incredible. It's the best we've got.

And then we did all the testing in '94 and '95, and we saw it again. In '94 we did what was called a Bradley Fighting Vehicle burn test. I loaded a Bradley Fighting Vehicle with munitions and explosives, and I set it off. And I found that the contamination was so extensive within 50 meters that you absolutely had to wear full respiratory and skin protection.

Well, the Army adopted those recommendations I put in, absolutely implemented them. They're in place now. So with every single incident where they use it you have to wear full respiratory and skin protection within 50 meters by U.S. Army specific guidance adopted by the Navy and everybody else.

When you get the stuff destroyed, it's like a checkerboard. It's all over the place.

And we know also from our experience that all respiratory and skin protection required within 50 meters' radius, that's about 160 feet, but the stuff goes out to about 400 meters. Now I did not measure any farther than 400 meters, because I couldn't out of my pad called the Nevada test site area 25. God knows how much farther it went. We know, absolutely totally confirm, no question about it, that at the National Lead site

where they were manufacturing it in Albany, N.Y., it went 30 miles, in sufficient quantities to cause health effects.

So, we put tons and tons and tons of solid radioactive materials all over the place. This stuff, when it hits, it breaks up, forms fine dust and oxides, and some of these dusts are so small, they are smaller than the inner diameter of a red blood cell. That's always been known.

Marion Fulk knew that from day one when he did the work on the Manhattan Project. Marion Fulk is one of the last living gods of the Manhattan Project. He was the particle physicist who spread all of this stuff in the atmosphere. He's the last living god. Two or three of the last remaining ones have died during the past few months.

ICONOCLAST: So, to recap?

ROKKE: What we have is deliberate use of solid radioactive materials all over the place and the deliberate refusal to provide the medical care that's mandated by Army orders and regulations, Department of Defense directives, and a simple refusal to clean up all the environmental contamination that must be done by the direct Army regulation. It's that easy. There's no accountability.

Anybody that speaks up becomes persona non grata and the attacks just come flying your way beyond comprehension.

ICONOCLAST: Is this a move toward population control or something?

ROKKE: No. No. Just killing and destroying on the battlefield. It's real simple. You've got to remember the soldier and the warrior. His job is to kill and destroy. And they don't think anything beyond that.

I've heard people say it's about population control. No. It's about killing and destroying. How do you do it effectively? That's it.

I mean, when I was director of the DU Project, when I was still in the good graces of the military and the secretary of the Army and everybody, at that time they loved me. Then they had a real problem. Anyhow, I went in with the intent to insure that if we did use this in combat that we could clean it up and provide the medical care and that everybody had the education: which is knowledge, which is training, which is skills necessary to work with it and respond and clean it up.

Well, what I found out real fast when I got in doing all this work for 15 months was "God Almighty, you can't clean it up. You can't provide medical care."

We knew we had to put procedures in place to minimize the effect as much as we could. That's why I wrote the Army regulations and put all the training programs together.

ICONOCLAST: Would you list yourself as a whistleblower?

ROKKE: Me? No. I'm an Army officer finishing my job.

I had a direct order to make sure the stuff is cleaned up. Multiple direct orders. Some people might call it a whistleblower because I got fed up with the fact they weren't complying in 1997 when the guys were sick and dying. I got fed up with it, but no, I'm

not a whistleblower. I'm just finishing a job.

I got an order signed by Gen.Schwartzkopf's chief of staff assigning me to do this for the commander. Schwartzkopf got the order on down from the Pentagon telling him to assign me to clean up the mess. To this day, I have no idea why.

ICONOCLAST: I understand a law just passed in the Louisiana House regarding testing for DU.

ROKKER: You betcha. 101 to nothing, mandating medical care. The individual that was responsible for that is Command Sgt. Major Bob Smith.

ICONOCLAST: What would it take to get Texas to pass something like that, for the health of our soldiers coming home?

ROKKER: I don't know. I've given talks at the University of Texas Medical School in Houston. Done the same up in Dallas. We've been right there in Crawford. All over the place.

One of the other doctors that works with us is Dr. Ruth McGill. They tried to kill Ruth McGill and I down there on the south side of Dallas a couple of years ago. They tried to run us off the road on that big expressway. We had just finished a radio and television interview, and we were on the way back, and they came right at us. Man, if Dr. McGill hadn't been a good driver we would have been dead meat.

ICONOCLAST: Who did this?

ROKKER: DOD guys. I had my house broken into a gazillion times when I was in Jacksonville, Alabama. Had windows shot out. I have had direct threats from Army officers in uniform. They bounced me out of the Army Reserve after I testified and forced the Secretary of Defense in England to admit he lied to the House of Lords. That was real interesting. Oh, they don't like any of us.

The simple thing is, you take tons and tons of solid radioactive waste, and you spread it all over the world, both here in the states and overseas, in combat situations and non-combat situations, do it into the ocean, then refuse to clean it up and provide the medical care. It's that easy.

You guys are so close to one the largest Army bases in the world that you could spit. I can bet you that if you go over there, even though you had all the orders mandated, thorough training on DU, and it's in the common task training manual for the Army, which means everybody in the Army must pass the DU test that I wrote, knowing what it is and how to handle it, how to respond — I betcha if you went over you wouldn't find anyone that knew or did it. And that's scary as hell.

ICONOCLAST: So what needs to happen?

ROKKER: The President needs to issue an order — he and that idiot over in England, his puppy dog ...

ICONOCLAST: Blair?

ROKKER: Yeah, Tony Blair. Just say, “Guys, you are going to comply with the orders that are issued.” When the commanding generals and all the captains and colonels and everybody don’t comply with an order and regulation, an order signed by the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army, and they don’t comply with the Army regulations signed by General Shinseki, they ought to court martial their ass.

ICONOCLAST: But wouldn’t that be the President overriding the Vice President?

ROKKER: No, the Vice President is just the head of the Senate. Cheney runs the thing because George is an idiot.

ICONOCLAST: But you would tell him (Bush) to start running it himself.

ROKKER: Yeah, he needs to run it himself. He’s the Commander-in-Chief. He just needs to tell them to comply with the orders and regulations that are issued. And tell them to stop using DU because it doesn’t even pass the common sense test. Who would want thousands and thousands of tons, who would even want five pounds, of solid radioactive materials thrown in your back yard? It doesn’t even pass the common sense test.

ICONOCLAST: You don’t think Bush is for DU?

ROKKER: Oh, yeah. They just go along with everything that’s happening.

If you look at everything, it’s real interesting. We know the Pentagon was never hit by an airliner, okay? Got hit by a cruise missile. Everybody knows that shit. No evidence of wreckage. No nothing. The hole was only 16 feet across. There’s no way an airliner is going to disappear in a 16-foot hole. When the roof fell down later on and they say in the 9-1-1 report, it was a dive bomb, no trench, no nothing. Hello. You know? Isn’t it astonishing? You go to the photograph of the 9-1-1 report on page 312 and look at it. It’s a little hole, and nothing’s burned and nothing’s along the sides of it. There’s no evidence of an airplane. There’s no trench. There’s no nothing. And then you kind of wonder how can they say that an airliner the size of a 757 did it. Nothing fits.

But you know, it’s the same thing when you come on down. Bush and all those guys, and Powell knew better, okay? They kept saying, “The reason we’re going into Iraq and Gulf War II is because they have WMDs, and they’re going to use them,” right?

Hell, Scott Ritter, Hans Blix, Richard Butler, all of us said we didn’t do it because we blew’em up way back in 1990.

Schwartzkopf’s autobiography on page 390 of *It Doesn’t Take A Hero*, specifically states that we made the decision.

This is a message from Schwartzkopf, between Powell, Schwartzkopf, Chuck Horner, and Dickie Cheney that we decided to blow up the stuff we gave Iraq in place so it wouldn’t be used on us.

And when we made that decision, we said we’re all going to get sick and guess what? You now have over 325,000 Gulf War I vets, say from August 1990 up till Fall of last year, permanently disabled. Hello? I mean, what more does it take? It’s astonishing.

When you add this all up, it stinks. What I see I don't like. You have to understand, I'm a red, white, and blue Army officer all the way. I joined the military in 1967, and I just retired. So that's how many years? Thirty-eight? You know, you're retired, but you're still in. It's a hell of a lot of years.

We got the orders to provide medical care for U.S. military, okay? Well, you can't under any common sense or international law or Geneva Convention refuse to provide that medical care for anybody else, especially non-combatants. But they do.

ICONOCLAST: It's unbelievable that medical care is not provided.

ROKKE: That's what I said when I kept getting these assignments to do it, and every time I got things done, I hit a roadblock, and then when I started yelling and screaming and trying to make them comply, I became persona non grata so fast it would make your head spin.

You know, sometimes, you just have to do what's right. Boy, they don't like it. Hell, I'm just finishing a job. I got an order to do it, and I'm an Army officer that does it. If somebody gets wounded in combat, you give him the medical care. If the area gets trashed in combat, you clean up the environment. Because otherwise, it's useless to go in there.

Everybody's scared and been lied to so many times. Then all this gets blown apart, like the fact that they've had to acknowledge that there were no WMDs — everybody knew that. The guys that said it knew that there weren't any because they had already made the decision to blow'em up. But you still have people that believe these lies.

What Is Depleted Uranium?

A Scientific Perspective

Interview with Leuren Moret, Geo-Scientist

A Military Perspective

Interview with Dr. Doug Rokke, Ph.D, former Director of the U.S. Army Depleted Uranium Project

A Survivor's Perspective

Interview with Melissa Sterry, Gulf War Veteran who is surviving the effects of depleted uranium

NEXT ARTICLES

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The Pentagon's Dirty Weapon Secret

by Maggie Nelson

In March 1, 1991 Lt. Col. M.T. Ziehm sent the Los Alamos Memorandum to military personnel involved with the clean up of DU. Ziehm told his staff that "There has been and continues to be a concern regarding the impact of DU on the environment." He directed staff to keep the information from the public as "DU rounds may become politically unacceptable and thus, be deleted from the arsenal." He said that if the DU weapons weren't advocated, "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."

Major Doug Rokke is aware of Lt. Col. Ziehm's attempt to keep the impact of DU quiet because he was one of the recipients of the memorandum. Major Rokke is also Dr. Rokke. He is a health physicist who was assigned to the team that planned and implemented clean up of DU after the 1991 Gulf War. His team was also assigned to provide medical care recommendations for exposed personnel. He saw firsthand what our weapons can do to the people and the environment.

In August 1994, Rokke was recalled to active duty as the Director of Depleted Uranium Project. During that time, he led the development of the depleted uranium education and training program and management procedures. The study was completed and distributed to the Department of Defense by January 1996. In addition, Rokke coordinated development and approval of the completed documents with British, Canadian, German and Australian military representatives.

Rokke, a veteran of the Vietnam and Gulf War, is literally putting his life on the line in order to get the word out. What he is telling anyone who will listen is that the world must ban the use of depleted uranium forever. And while he is telling members of Congress and all Americans that the continued use of depleted uranium is a "crime against God and humanity," the Pentagon is forging ahead

with their plans to use DU in the imminent Iraq war. At the same time, the US government is taking extreme efforts to cover up the catastrophic effects of their use of DU during the first Gulf War.

The Ripsaw spoke with Rokke by telephone on February 18. He had just returned to his home in Illinois from Seattle, Wash., where he had appeared as an expert witness in a court hearing and made numerous public appearances.

Ripsaw News From your credentials, I see that you worked for the University of Illinois. Are you currently working there?

Doug Rokke No, I'm substituting. I was a research scientist and professor. I've taught everything now from 2nd grade reading through graduate level physics and environmental engineering. I'm still an Army Major in the Reserves.

RSN Has the military given you any flack for speaking out about DU weapons?

DR Flack? Flack is an understatement. I'm not talking about flack just verbally. I'm talking about real flack. They're upset with our whole team. When people from the inside go out and tell the truth, they don't like it.

RSN What kind of flack have you gotten?

DR Everything from lost jobs to bullets to beatings to problems with the IRS. Now they're garnishing my disability check from the Veterans Administration. In the United States, they can do anything they want. It's just reality. You just ignore them and go on.

RSN You've been telling everyone about the dangers of depleted uranium. What is DU?

DR Well, depleted uranium isn't really depleted. It's just uranium-238. It's contaminated with plutonium, neptunium and americium. It's the by-product of the enrichment process. There's nothing depleted about it. You couldn't take a single bullet and throw it in your backyard and not go to jail. But they use it and they don't care.

The Dept. of Defense has everyone confused that it's either coated or tipped. It's not. It's a solid pencil. It's a solid gigantic dart. A 120-millimeter tank round is actually three-quarters inches diameter and 18 inches long. It's solid uranium. The wart hog, also called the A-10 fighter or tank buster, shoots a slug of 300 grams or three-quarters of a pound each. Of solid uranium. And they fire that at 4000 rounds a minute. A ton and a half a minute. We have the land mines or personnel mines. And we have the 25mm for the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the 20mm for the Navy phalanx.

They've been shooting that off the coasts of Washington and Nova Scotia. The congressmen out in Washington [state] are all pissed at the Navy right now for shooting up their prime fisheries. The Navy says, "There are no health or environmental effects from it. We don't have to worry about it." Admiral Riley sent a letter stating that to Congressman James McDermott. When I got off the plane in Washington they took me directly to a meeting with McDermott. It was

supposed to last 45 minutes. Two and a half hours later, no one was going any place. He was getting madder and madder.

So, yeah, we just shot it up. Then we shot up an estimated 380 tons in the desert. That's just the solid uranium. Then we just walked away. And then we did the same thing in Kosovo and the Balkans in '94 and '95 and then again there in '99. And then in Vieques, Puerto Rico in February 1999, in Okinawa in '95 and '96 and then all over the United States. They didn't tell the Japanese for over a year.

RSN Why did we do that in those places?

DR Just idiots. I don't know how else to describe it. They want to shoot it so they shoot it. It's like deer hunting. You go out and sight your gun before you go deer hunting. Same thing with these guys. They sight their guns before they go people hunting.

RSN Why do they use this stuff?

DR It's an awesome killer. It's like going from a bow and arrow to an atomic bomb. The stuff has a flat trajectory. They can't miss with it. Anything that it hits goes, "boom." What happens on impact is that uranium is soft and malleable. When it impacts, part of that uranium comes off—about 40 percent. So every 10-pound round that we have, we get four pounds of spalling. This is everything from the size of marbles down to sub-micron dust. All of the stuff is on fire. It's like taking a handful of ball bearings and lighting them on fire and throwing them at high velocity across the room. It causes secondary detonations, explosions and fires. Stuff is on fire and goes "boom" and impact goes "boom" and anything it hits goes "boom-boom." You have catastrophic detonation. And then anything it hits has explosives or anything that will burn. Shrapnel just flies across inside and trashes anything that's in there. In war we're going to kill and destroy everything that's in our path. You're killing and dying in war. The gas masks that the kids are supposed to wear to protect themselves—they don't work. The particles are so small that the stuff goes right through the gas masks.

RSN I saw the 60 Minutes program on that. I also watched C-Span during the Senate hearings about it.

DR: How about that! [laughing] Peter [Jennings] did a pretty good job on that. We set that up for 60 Minutes. We set up C-Span too with the General Accounting Office.

RSN You once said that when you went into Iraq after the first Gulf War, your first words after you saw the area were, "Oh, My God!" What did you see that made you say that?

DR Cross contamination and casualties. You know, crispy critters. Doesn't make for a nice day. They were Americans and Iraqi. Most of the casualties during Gulf War I were "friendly fire." We shot our own.

RSN You collected a lot of information and presented it to the Pentagon. What did they do with all of that information?

DR They just set it aside and disregarded it because of the Los Alamos Memorandum. This is the letter that came to me in Saudi Arabia and said that we're always going to use DU so lie about the health and environmental effects. Real cut and dry. Then we did all the other reports and the same conclusions kept coming all of the time but they just disregard it. You've got to understand who's the bad guy here. Who ever has the biggest gun and can use the biggest gun sets the rules and they can use whatever they want. It just doesn't matter. DU is basically a massive dirty bomb. So we've launched way over a million dirty bombs. And we walked away and refused to do environmental and medical even though all the directives are there. I can't even get medical care for the friendly fire casualties from the Gulf War I yet. I still can't get medical care for everybody. RSN I saw in some of the information that the members of your team have suffered health effects since the Gulf War. What kind of problems have they had?

DR Yeah, there were probably about a hundred and everyone is either sick or dead. Only one person wasn't sick. I haven't talked to him for a few months. He might even be now. At least 30 people have died from our group. Families don't want to talk about it anymore. They're frustrated and don't want anything to do with it anymore.

RSN What kind of illnesses are you talking about?

DR Cancer and respiratory, kidney problems, rashes and gastro-intestinal problems. It all goes back completely to what we call the Groves Memorandum. You wouldn't believe it. Read it through carefully and then cry. The Groves Memorandum is from October 1943. It told the US to use radioactive material uranium to contaminate air, water and soil to kill everyone in Germany and Europe. They didn't use it there but they use it now. It's the earliest documentation that I could find to verify the effects and intent.

RSN Will the US be using DU in the imminent Iraq war?

DR They already are. All over the place. It's been on NBC and, CBS already that they are. When we were 'setting the Pentagon up' for 60 Minutes, the generals said that "All of our troops are totally prepared." And then they flashed the video to show that the kids didn't know what to do and the equipment was broke. They don't care. Then you get all of these groups running around saying "Support the troops, support the troops." If you were supporting the troops, you'd make sure that they had equipment that worked, they'd get the medical care that they needed, and the education and training that they need to go to war. I don't understand it. [Ed. Note: The Pentagon spokesperson was Dr. Anna Johnson-Winegar, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense.]

RSN You've worked really hard to get medical care for the troops that were in Gulf War I. You are saying that you've had no success. Why can't you get help for them?

DR They say that there are no problems. You don't look, you don't find—you don't find, you don't have any responsibility. It's real easy. We're looking right now, when you put all the numbers together, at a quarter of a million soldiers from Gulf War I who are permanently disabled. It's totally astonishing. They aren't admitting anything. If they admit it, they'd have to pay for it and no one would want to go

back over there.

RSN Why don't we hear more about this on the news, and why aren't people learning about it? Why are they denying everything?

DR Liability. It's not about a handful of US soldiers. They can take care of all of us in a heartbeat. If they acknowledge what happened to the US soldiers, then they have to acknowledge what happened to all of the coalition forces. And once they acknowledge that, they have to acknowledge what happened to the enemy soldiers. And once they acknowledge that, it's the non-combatants around the world. And that's not good. How do you acknowledge that the US deliberately and willfully poisoned and killed a million kids?

RSN Not to mention birth defects, right?

DR Birth defects are terrible. Birth defects both in the US and Iraq. That isn't being acknowledged by the government. There's been documentation on this but the soldiers have been told if they tell what happened, they will lose their medical care. They try to get us to quit talking about it. I get some medical care but I fight for it and then they garnishee my wages for it. From my disability check. Isn't that astonishing? It's all intimidation. They hope that we'll quit talking about it.

RSN You said that you've been physically assaulted for speaking out?

DR Oh yeah. Bullets come flying through the windows.

RSN At your house?

DR Well, sure they shoot up your house. Why wouldn't they? It's for real. Bob Rabin in Vieques, Puerto Rico was beaten by the Navy. You can go to his Web site and see pictures of the Navy beating him. Because he was speaking out. We were working together. At the same time that they were beating him, they were shooting at me.

RSN Was their purpose to shut you up?

DR Yes. But we're not going to do it. They don't like it, but what the heck. In November, they tried to run Dr. Ruth McGill and me off the road down in Dallas, Texas. We were in the car together. We had just come back from doing a television documentary and we'd had meetings with a bunch of doctors down there at the university. They figured that if we were getting too close, they'd just try to run us off the road. You know, shit happens.

RSN Who are "they?" Are they military people?

DR Yes.

You have to understand this whole thing in Iraq. First of all, Al Qaida was never involved in 9.11. That's a given. Everyone knows that there were warnings out there. That was totally ignored. The whole thing was all about an oil well. You have to understand that the Taliban was a legitimate government of Afghanistan

The US destroyed a legitimate government in order to get a pipeline put in.

Unocal is owned by Dick Cheney. You have to understand where it all comes about. Another thing to research is the Carlyle Group. George H. Bush worked for the Carlyle Group. Him and a whole bunch of others. You know who owns the Carlyle Group? Bin Laden. The Sept. 24 issue of <Newsweek> last year did a whole story on it. It showed the whole outline. On February 12, 1998 there was a congressional discussion on overthrowing the Taliban in order to put the pipeline in. It's right in the Congressional Record. It's totally astonishing.

RSN I heard that Hamid Karzai, the Afghanistan president chosen by the Bush administration, worked for Unocal? Is that true?

DR Yes. So, now it's real simple. We've got uranium munitions that trashed the environment during Gulf War I. My talk for the US Senate back in 2000 outlines what happened in Gulf War I. We sold Iraq all the chem and bios so that's how we knew what it was. That's in the Riegle Report. We sold all of that stuff and then we blew it all up. We made that conscious decision to blow everything up so it contaminated everybody. Then we had total misuse of pesticides. That's another one. The whole nightmare hell. It's just ridiculous.

We are still destroying huge areas of the earth and we haven't changed anything and have no intention of changing things. And now we're going in and doing it all over again. And then we give the troops defective equipment and send them in there. When I got home last night and heard that 60 Minutes had done a good story that we'd been working on, I said, "Yeah, Yeah!" I've sent them so many e-mails and they've been working with so many of us and we've been working with the GAO on it and doing research on it. The Army doesn't want it out. Check out the BBC. They've got great stuff on our work. And the Canadians, too, on CBC.

RSN Everyone but the US media, huh?

DR We did all of this work, but you can go to the Dept. of Defense Web site and type in our names and none of our reports comes up. You can go to the Center for Disease Control, and we did all of the work, and it doesn't come up when you try to find it. What it all boils down to, the Persian Gulf is a completely contaminated area. It's a toxic wasteland. Now we're sending the kids back into battle again with defective equipment in a toxic wasteland with medical care broken.

And it's all over oil. I can guarantee you that Saddam does not have an offensive military capability. He can't attack us. He doesn't even have a defensive capability. We destroyed them in place. We trashed everything. We started destroying everything in December of '90 and before. Go to Schwarzkopf's autobiography, It Doesn't Take a Hero, and go to page 39. It's right there, the decision that we made in '90 to blow everything up in place.

RSN Does the depleted uranium stay there forever?

DR Unless we removed it and cleaned it all up. I learned when I did the research that that was impossible. Totally, totally, friggin' impossible. The uranium contamination in and around the destroyed equipment on the "Highway of Death" is huge. If you go back in there, you'll stir it up and breathe it in and you're in deep

doo-doo.

When you look at the VA casualty data tables from the Gulf War period, you'll see that there are an additional 60,000 on permanent disability and another two or three thousand are dead. And the only reason that can happen is from the existing contamination. There aren't any ongoing battles. So the epidemiology is there. And the people who are living there are going down like flies. You're not going to see a whole

lot about that in any US media, but you will from all over the world. Go to www.ngwrc.org and then follow that to the DU link and you'll pull up photos of birth defects of some of the kids. Be ready to cry.

RSN What does the White House have to say about DU?

DR Just go to the White House Web site and pull up "Depleted Uranium" and you'll find out. They say that all of this stuff about the environmental effects is all Iraqi propaganda. We're laughing at it because at the trial they said, "This is what the White House says. Now here are the official government documents." But they don't care. You have to understand that when working with the Clinton and Bush administrations their code word for how to get by with this is "No Convenient Legal Authority." It means that they're above the law.

This whole war was planned, executed and prepared long before Bush was ever elected. Bush is irrelevant. The Council on Foreign Relations is behind this. Check out the Journal called Foreign Affairs and read last year's April/May issue and then read the brand new issue that came out this month. Also, check out "Project Shad" on a search engine. It's about the deliberate use of biological, chemical and radiological on American citizens. Mike Kilpatrick got forced into admitting that at the Center for Disease Control Conference last May 23. It's astonishing.

You do have to understand this and it's confusing to some military people. If another country becomes a viable threat, if somebody comes after us, I'm going to nuke them in a heartbeat. But we're not going to Iraq to protect ourselves. The Congress of the United States and the President have absolutely no authority to launch an attack against another nation that is not a belligerent nation and has not attacked us. That's under the "Law of Land Warfare." The Congress can say all they want, "You can go to war," but they have no authority. And the United States has no authority to launch a preemptive strike.

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West Texas news and sports/December 8, 1997

Gulf War Syndrome Hearing sheds helpful light on illnesses, their cause

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By MARLA DIAL
Staff Writer

Despite a small turnout, a three-day Yellow Ribbon Commission hearing wrapped up Sunday with a renewed sense of hope for some Gulf War veterans from San Angelo.

Some were at the end of their ropes before coming to the conference. After coming back sick from the war, they believed they'd exhausted all resources in their search for treatment and compensation.

Others left with possible explanations for continuing illnesses and a list of places they could turn to for help.

Bruce Hill Jr., 36, was among those who felt worn out in his quest for proper medical care. When he learned of the hearings, sponsored by the Odessa-based Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Association, he knew he needed to get involved.

"I found out there was more people, more help out there than I thought - instead of just being alone," said Hill, a former Air Force mechanic who worked on bomber aircraft during the Gulf War.

The conference brought veterans together with county service officers who can help them file benefits claims, a Texas Veterans Land Board representative with information about housing assistance and home improvement programs, a doctor and researcher who believes he has found the key to mysterious Gulf illnesses and a Houston attorney suing

dozens of multinational companies that sold chemicals to Iraq before the war.

“I think (the event) was hugely successful,” said Lianne Flint, ODSA's regional coordinator. “We have helped a homeless couple get housing, we have provided information for filing claims, we have developed a relationship with Gary Rommelfanger,” the Tom Green County veterans service officer.

“I couldn't even have dreamed of anything better than this.”

One of the function's primary goals was to allow veterans to tell their stories about Gulf War experiences and troubles with government health care. But not all vets who came were sick.

Cody Rogers, a former Marine Corps truck mechanic, attended out of concern for his daughters. He'd heard some Gulf vets' children were sick or deformed, but his kids - both born after war - are fine. Rogers, 40, said he hasn't been sick either.

Jesse Green, 56, was encouraged to attend by his wife, who'd noticed personality changes.

Green spent 24 years in the military - serving in the Navy during the Vietnam War and in the Army for Desert Storm. Although he's seen all kinds of danger in several of the world's hot spots, the Middle East conflict - where he served at division headquarters for an intelligence unit - seems to bother him the most.

Since returning from Iraq, Green said, “I get upset over a lot of things. A Christmas story will make me cry - it's something I never did before.”

A 27-year-old Navy vet, whose ship was struck by 25-mm depleted uranium bullets, checked out the conference because of continued stomach problems. His severe gastrointestinal pains began about a month after his arrival in the Gulf. Civilian doctors, who don't know his military background, can't explain the problem, and the man said a Veterans Administration doctor made only a cursory examination.

“I had no idea they thought some of this stuff could be caused by a parasite” before discussing his illness with ODSA members on Sunday, said the veteran, who asked that his name not be used. “Just hearing about it today, I was like, ‘Can you get tested for it? Where can I go to find out about this?’”

“I guess, overall, I'm real glad I came because you're getting more information.”

The next time he's sick, the man said, he'll remember to tell his doctor where he served and ask him to check out some unusual causes.

During the weekend, several veterans got detailed neurological exams for the first time by Dr. William Baumzweiger, a researcher who believes Gulf War illnesses can be traced to damage in the central nervous system. After explaining his theory to about a dozen listeners Saturday afternoon, the former VA doctor spent most of Sunday morning giving free examinations in his room at the Holiday Inn.

Pushing and prodding his patients, Baumzweiger repeatedly found loss of muscle strength, lack of sensation in the feet and hands - sometimes extending halfway up a leg or arm - and other problems. When asked to touch the doctor's finger or point to the location of a sound with his eyes closed, one man continually missed by several inches, even feet. The doctor attributed that to damage to his cranial nerves.

One of the most serious problems diagnosed in several veterans was a loss of lateral vision - the inability to see objects not directly in front of them. Former Air Force nurse Denise Nichols said that condition, also caused by cranial nerve damage, could account for why many Gulf vets are killed in car crashes, which government officials say is a more common cause of death than physical illnesses for that group.

Other events during the Yellow Ribbon hearings included a discussion of a lawsuit brought by Houston attorney Frank Spangeletti, who is seeking at least \$1 billion in damages from companies that sold chemicals to Iraq or helped create the infrastructure that turned them into weapons. The lawsuit, which he hopes will be accepted as class-action litigation for Gulf vets, is pending in Angleton.

Spangeletti said the suit is different from litigation over Agent Orange, in which families sued Dow Chemical Co. in its capacity as a government contractor. Instead, it's targeted at around 70 entities that “privately sold chemical and biological agents to the Iraqis” from bases in Europe, the Far East and the United States, he said.

“I view them as cockroaches, and the only way they can do it is in the dark,” the lawyer said, several veterans nodding in agreement.

Although he has not limited the damages being sought, Spangeletti said the lawsuit “is not about people trying to make money and get rich.”

Instead, he wants any damages collected to help pay for Gulf vets' medical care.

Most of the conference's speakers voiced dissatisfaction with the government's response to Gulf illness complaints, but only one - San Angelo psychiatrist Dr. Ruth McGill - made criticism the focus of her speech. Mixing clinical expertise with political opinion, she questioned the government's research techniques and baldly accused the Department of Defense of spreading disinformation about Gulf War illness.

No government representatives were present to respond to McGill's allegations. ODSA coordinator Flint said several government agents - including Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison and Phil Gramm, VA hospital officials and leaders from Goodfellow Air Force Base - were invited to attend the hearings, but most didn't send a reply.

McGill said Tracy McBride, a 19-year-old airman who was kidnapped from Goodfellow and murdered a few years ago, was a victim of Gulf War Syndrome. She contended that convicted murderer Louis Jones was "actively hallucinating" when he raped and killed her, later hiding her body.

The psychiatrist, who offered to testify for the defense at Jones' murder trial, said information researchers now have about Gulf War illnesses might have changed the verdict in the death-penalty case.

"I believe that Sgt. Jones was lost to himself at the time he committed the murder," she said, speaking of his remorse and model behavior in prison.

McGill said if society can hold Jones responsible for McBride's death and condemn Timothy McVeigh - who she also believes has Gulf War illness - to death for the Oklahoma City bombing, "we should try some generals along with them."

The political content of other speeches was considerably lower-toned, in keeping with ODSA's goal of conducting the hearings as a fact-finding mission, not a finger-pointing operation.

Nevertheless, a message was audible.

"I agree with Frank Spangeletti that this is an issue we cannot trivialize," neurologist Baumzweiger said. "It isn't even about you sick Gulf War veterans, as concerned as I am about you.... There's a much bigger issue here, and that is the nature of our democracy."

Baumzweiger said he believes veterans have a constitutional right to health information. He also said he doesn't want children to grow up believing soldiers ``can be thrown away like paper plates" after they've been used.

``I think our country has a moral and ethical obligation to take care of people who have become sick in the course of defending us in the world," he said.

The Gulf illness issue is so big, he added, it likely will cast a shadow over late 20th-century history - and it must be faced.

``It's about what kind of people we are - what we're willing to do to one another," he said.

For information about the Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Association, call 653-1809 or log on at <http://members.aol.com/WDSshadow/index.html>.

For help filing a claim, contact the Tom Green County Veterans Service Office at 659-6560.