

CRDU GOALS

*To present the latest facts and figures on the use of DU munitions and products by the U.S. and other governments.

*To describe and monitor DU's effect on troops, veterans, and civilian populations in not only the countries where it was used but also countries to which the particles have traveled.

*To advocate for the testing and treatment of returning troops for DU poisoning.

*To act as a clearinghouse for information on the rights and resources available to DU victims.

*To network with other DU groups and human rights organizations worldwide to work toward the eventual ban of DU weapons and products.

The Department of Defense has known for many years that exposure to DU can result in serious, long term health problems but refuses to acknowledge publicly the increasing numbers of illnesses identified in civilians and veterans who have come in contact with this substance. The Military Toxic Project newsletter stated in 1997 "DU harms not only troops and rescue workers on the battlefield but also the communities near the uranium mines, the workers who process uranium and manufacture the DU weapons, the communities whose land is contaminated by DU weapons testing and warfare and the communities who ultimately serve as DU repositories."

**For More Information
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COALITION TO BAN DEPLETED URANIUM

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Coalition members:

- **Bronx Action for Justice and Peace**
- **Bronx Greens**
- **Bronx-Westchester Nation Discussion Group**
- **Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition**
- **No War Westchester**
- **Park Slope Greens**
- **Veterans for Peace**
- **WESPAC**



Gerard Matthew and daughter Victoria Claudette

COALITION TO BAN DEPLETED URANIUM



WHAT IS DU?

Depleted Uranium (DU) is the isotope U238 which results when fissionable isotope U235 is extracted from natural uranium. It's used in munitions, tank armor and the ballast of cruise missiles.

DU is available in large quantities. It's dense, cheap, burns on impact, and is a toxic, mutagenic and radioactive heavy metal. It can also injure or kill military personnel or civilians not subject to the weapons immediate impact. When it does impact a target, a large amount of kinetic energy is dissipated as heat. This results in smoke with a high concentration of DU particles which, if inhaled or ingested, are severely toxic.

The U. S. Army has been developing DU munitions for over 30 years. In operation Desert Storm where DU bullets were first introduced, U. S. forces fired 940,000 small caliber and 4000 large caliber DU rounds in combat. Since the Gulf War none of the more than 600,000 pounds of DU have been cleaned up. No responsibility has been taken for the exposure of veterans and active U. S. forces now in the area or the exposed populations of Kuwait and Iraq. Since that war, U. S. forces deployed to Somalia with DU munitions, the Air Force shot DU penetrators in Bosnia and evidence is now accumulating that DU was used in the Balkan war as well.

Front picture: Spc. Gerard Matthew tested positive for DU exposure after returning from Iraq. His daughter, Victoria Claudette, was born with three fingers missing from her right hand.

HEALTH EFFECTS FROM DU EXPOSURE

Particles of uranium smaller than 5 microns in diameter can become permanently trapped in the lungs. Once trapped, these particles can cause damage to surrounding lung tissue. It exposes that tissue to 1360 rem per year, 800 times the annual radiation dosage permitted by federal regulations. Other particles may be ingested and can travel to the kidneys (one of the organs most sensitive to DU destruction) and the reproductive organs.

DU shells used by American and British forces have been targeted as the cause of increasing amounts of cancer in Iraq, with hospital wards filled with children suffering serious malignancies. Many of these children were unborn at the time of the Gulf War.

From 1946 to 1968 more than 13 million tons of uranium was mined on the Navajo reservation to make atom bombs, resulting in the deaths from lung cancer and other illnesses of most of the 2000 Navajo uranium miners who worked in the four comers (northeast Arizona, northwest New Mexico, southeast Utah, and southwest Colorado) from 1947 to 1971. Despite evidence that cancer is ravaging the Navajo communities and that birth defect rates are abnormally high, the U.S. government has denied funding for a complete epidemiological study.

LEGISLATION

CBDU was instrumental in working with New York State Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz (D-Bronx) in drafting a bill to have military personnel tested and treated for exposure to DU. Senator Thomas Morahan (R-Rockland Cty.) introduced a similar bill in the New York State Senate. On Veteran's Day 2006, the DU screening bill was signed into law.

The new law calls for a task force to be established consisting of scientists, health care professionals, military personnel and local citizens. The job of the task force will be to:

**“develop ... a health registry for veterans and military personnel returning from Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries in which exposure to... depleted uranium may be found”*

**“develop a plan for outreach to and follow-up of military personnel and veterans in consultation with the division of veterans' affairs and the adjutant general”*

**“prepare a report for service members and veterans concerning potential exposure to ... depleted uranium and the precautions recommended under combat and non-combat conditions while in a combat theater or combat zone”*

New York now joins California, Connecticut and Louisiana as one of only four states to provide services for the testing and treatment of returning troops for exposure to depleted uranium. Similar bills are being introduced in many states.