

Outbreak of Gulf War Syndrome

The Green Party of England and Wales

<http://www.greenparty.org.uk>

Concerns for the health of UK troops in Iraq was expressed by the Green Party today, at fears that another outbreak of "Gulf War Syndrome" may be imminent.

Chris Busby, Green Party Science and Technology spokesperson said: "Recent calls to 'unite behind our boys' sound hollow in the ears of many veterans of the first Gulf War. Returning home with a range of illnesses including degeneration of the nervous system and various cancers, as well as less easily defined immune system failings, they were not protected by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

"By contrast their symptoms and even their deaths were dismissed as of 'psychological origin'. Their calls to have themselves tested for the residue of the depleted uranium (DU) weapons they had been exposed to were denied and are still being blocked by an MoD Committee.

"Many have paid from their own pensions to have their blood and urine tested abroad, no longer trusting UK government laboratories."

Chris Busby, who represents the Gulf War Veterans on the MoD's Depleted Uranium Oversight Board was appalled at the thought of the further suffering that would be caused by this war. "The allies are planning to use more than five times the amount of DU they used the first time around in the Gulf. That caused illness in around half our soldiers, as well as thousands of cancers amongst civilians and horrible birth defects in Iraqi children.

"The only course for those who genuinely support our soldiers is to have them immediately withdrawn from the battlefield so that they are not exposed to these deadly poisons."

Dr Busby added "In the longer term we must all press for the abandonment of DU weapons, which are a form of indirect chemical and nuclear warfare and certainly represent a weapon of mass destruction.

"I have been shocked by the lack of concern for our soldiers on the part of the MoD. The UK Veterans have felt the need to have independent experts back them up against these attacks by the MoD suggesting that they are mental disturbed in order to dismiss their very real symptoms."

There is evidence that no more care will be shown following this war. A motion that Dr Busby submitted to the Committee to introduce a range of warnings before, and treatment after the war for the effects of the DU bombing was voted down in the MoD Depleted Uranium Oversight Board on 11th March.

NOTE: The contamination is likely to seriously escalate once the 'shock and awe' campaign begins. Some of the bunker buster bombs contain as much as 7 tons of DU. Overall it has been calculated on the basis of 30% hard target breakdown fraction that the total DU or Uranium used will be 1900 tons.