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HELEN CALDICOTT

John LeKay: Many Native Americans in the US who have mined the uranium or live near the abandoned mines, have experienced some unusual symptoms; particularly with the Lakota people in the South Dakota reservations: Standing Rock, Rock Creek, Harding County and Pine Ridge and the Navaho Natives in some parts of Nevada and New Mexico.

Helen Caldicott: Yes.

John LeKay: Brain and kidney cancer seem to be escalating. There is also an unusually high rate of birth abnormalities and an increase in women having miscarriages. What does this indicate to you and what do you think these Native Americans should be doing about this situation?

Helen Caldicott: Well, they live near uranium tailings and uranium mines, and they are exposed to radiation continuously. Either from the radon gas which is continually excreted from the uranium tailings. Radon gas is an alpha emitter, a very potent carcinogen. It causes lung cancers and various other cancers. The other material that they are exposed to continuously is radium; which is the daughter of uranium; which is very soluble and which LEACHES from the uranium tailings into their water supply and re-concentrates back into their food. So they are eating radioactive food. Radium itself causes bone cancer or leukemia but can cause other nasty side effects such as congenital anomalies and the like. So these people are living in a consistent field of radioactive materials. That's why their incidences of cancer and congenital defects are high.

John LeKay: Have you ever treated anyone with uranium sickness?



Reilly Pass abandoned uranium mine.

Photo: Harold One Feather

Helen Caldicott: No, I haven't. I haven't worked in hospitals close to uranium mines, but in the past, one-third of the men who have mined uranium have developed or died of lung cancer. Mining uranium is a very dangerous occupation and so is living near these tailings. The tailings themselves, the waste products FROM uranium mining, are very radioactive and should be re-buried back into the soil and they never are.

John LeKay: What about the uranium dust that is picked up by the wind?

Helen Caldicott: The dust is very radioactive and it carries with it radon gas; and uranium dust itself is a very potent carcinogen that causes bone cancer; it causes lung cancer; it causes leukemia; it causes kidney cancer and it can cause congenital malformations. So the dust is very very dangerous.

John LeKay: There is a lot of wild life around the area where all these mines are. What about the cattle that are grazing on the grass and drinking the water. Could radium be passed through to the human population this way?

Helen Caldicott: Yes, radium, which is the daughter of uranium and uranium itself both concentrate in the cattle, in the food, and in the muscle; and therefore people will almost certainly be eating radioactive meat from cattle that are grazing nearby.

John LeKay: I believe that the cattle meat in South Dakota is sold to every single state in the US.

Helen Caldicott: Well, it depends on how close the cattle are to the uranium tailings. How close are they? Are they where they graze?

John LeKay: There are 89 abandoned mines located in the Black Hills. I have been told some of the cattle ranches border the reservations. Apparently rainwater is constantly running off the Riley Pass uranium mine and into the Grand River and the grasslands water. I read that many of the cattle that drink this water have hair that is turning white. Environmentalist, Harold One Father and Charmaine Whiteface, who is also a biologist and member of the Defenders of the Black Hills, articulate this problem on the following NPR radio link:

www.sdpb.org/Archives/ProgramDetail.asp?ProgID=3811

Helen Caldicott: If they are grazing near the uranium tailings, that's a very dangerous thing to do.



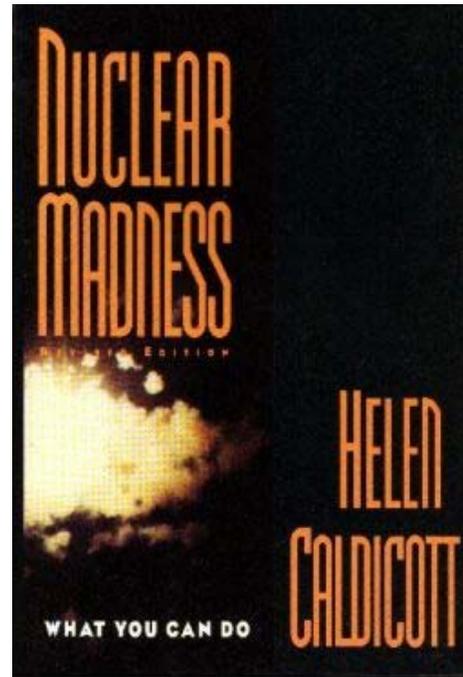
Cancerous lung caused by uranium dust



Cow in Iraq

John LeKay: How does uranium affect the DNA?

Helen Caldicott: Uranium actually clings to the DNA; chemically combines with DNA so much so that in medicine, in histology, in pathology, we use uranium ions (which are uranium ions) to increase the stainings in our preparations BECAUSE URANIUM chemically combines with DNA. Obviously because of this mechanism, uranium damages DNA. URANIUM IS ALSO a heavy metal AND like all heavy metals it IS EXCRETED THROUGH THE KIDNEY WHERE IT CAN CAUSE ACUTE NEPHRITIS AND ALSO KIDNEY CANCER YEARS LATER BECAUSE IT IS radioactive. So, from three perspectives - it can damage DNA, causing mutations and cancer, IT CAN DAMAGE KIDNEY FUNCTION and IT CAN CAUSE congenital anomalies BECAUSE IT IS EXCRETED IN THE SEMEN AS WELL AS IN THE URINE.



Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do
by Helen Caldicott

John LeKay: So, that would be passed on to generations of people?

Helen Caldicott: If the DNA is damaged in the eggs or the sperm - those congenital or genetic abnormalities could or would be passed on to future generations.

John LeKay: So what it's really doing is DAMAGING the gene pool of these people?

Helen Caldicott: Exactly. If you want to read more about this - read my book "Nuclear Madness, What You Can Do" (you can get it from Amazon) and then you will understand lay terminology and how these things can damage the DNA; how they can cause cancer and the like.

John LeKay: Is there a difference between depleted uranium and NATURAL uranium in terms of its toxicity?

Helen Caldicott: Depleted uranium. Depleted uranium is just named depleted because when you dig uranium up from the ground there are basically two isotopes. They are both radioactive; one is uranium 235, which is used to power nuclear power plants and to make nuclear bombs, and the stuff that is left after you remove the uranium 235 is uranium 238 and it's called depleted only because it's depleted of uranium 235.



Uranium 235

John LeKay: In terms of the health hazards ; it's really basically the same thing. It doesn't make a difference if it's depleted or not?

Helen Caldicott: Correct. In medical terms - no difference.

John LeKay: Do you think the Gulf War Syndrome could be a depleted uranium sickness?

Helen Caldicott: Yes, absolutely. A large NUMBER of the Gulf War Syndrome SYMPTOMS ARE RELATED TO the URANIUM TOXICITY, caused by depleted uranium, OR uranium 238 AS I prefer to call it. If you want to read about that, one of my latest books is called :

"The New Nuclear Danger
George W. Bush's Military Industrial Complex"
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1565847407?v=glance>

There's a whole chapter on depleted uranium and what they are doing in Iraq.



Depleted Uranium's effects on children in Iraq

John LeKay: Why do you think depleted uranium weapons have not been banned?

Helen Caldicott: Because the Pentagon likes them.

John LeKay: Why do you think that is?

Helen Caldicott: Well, because they are very effective weapons. The shells are made of ten POUNDS of solid uranium 238 which is 1.7 times more dense than lead. So when it's shot out FROM A GUN at fast velocity, it reaches great momentum and it slices through the steel of the other person's tank like a hot knife through butter and it's also pyrophoric; so when it hits the tank - it burns at very very high temperature and about 80 percent of it DISSIPATES into dust that can be inhaled by the children and by the people. And it is also ENTERING the food chain THROUGH CONTAMINATED water and THROUGH the milk AS WELL AS OTHER FOODSTUFFS - contaminating them for the rest of time BECAUSE the half life of uranium 238 is 4.5 billion years.



John LeKay: So in looking at the life and death cycle of uranium from mining it to putting it into weapons; it's having devastating effects on the Lakota and Navaho Natives on this side of the planet. Then in terms of where these weapons are going to land, in Iraq or elsewhere; it's going to have the same outcome on them and our young soldiers who are also exposed to it.

Helen Caldicott: Correct. You are absolutely right, but the problem you haven't mentioned - the main part of the uranium fuel cycle, which is to enrich the uranium which is mined and to put it into nuclear power plants. And uranium that is put into a nuclear power plant becomes one billion times more radioactive than the original uranium before it was put into the power plants.

John LeKay: Can you repeat that?

Helen Caldicott: A billion times more radioactive.

John LeKay: And these power plants are potentially like Chernobyl.

Helen Caldicott: Yes, and I've just written a new book called Nuclear Power Is Not the Answer.

<http://www.amazon.ca/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/books/1595580670/reviews>

which is coming out in August and you can read all about that.

John LeKay: Have you heard anything about the white phosphorous that was used in November 2004, in the offensive incendiary "shake and bake" strike against the city of Fallujah?

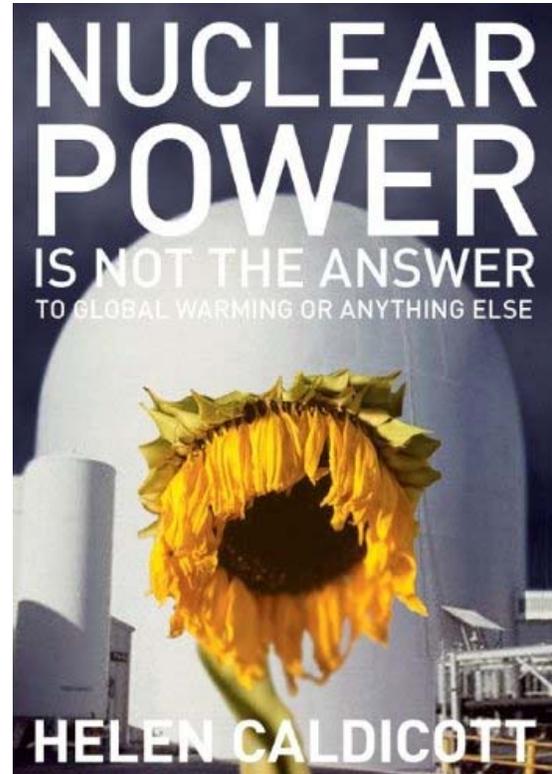
Helen Caldicott: I do know that they have been using white phosphorous and napalm in Iraq. Yes, they are using white phosphorous and they are using napalm which are international war crimes.

John LeKay: Why do you believe the Geneva Chemical Weapons Conventions are not working and the International Court is not intervening at this point and just allowing this to go on?

Helen Caldicott: Well, I don't think America takes any notice of the International Court or the Geneva Conventions. It just doesn't care. It does what it just wants to do.

John LeKay: Why do you think the mainstream media is not telling us what is going on with the use of depleted uranium and the white phosphorous, napalm ?

Helen Caldicott: I think partly it's because it is a very complex medical and biological problem; and because the Pentagon is lying and saying that it's all safe and the media have a short attention span and many of the journalists don't



spend enough time to investigate it. So they get confused and so they don't deal with it. Also, I think because there's a huge black ban from anyone reporting on it and it comes from the Pentagon.

John LeKay: You're saying there's a ban?

Helen Caldicott: There's a black ban; the Pentagon doesn't produce any documentation of what it's doing and the media are intimidated.

John LeKay: What do you think of the grass roots organizations, blogs and websites that are trying to get this truth out there?

Helen Caldicott: Well they are doing the best they can, but as you see, there hasn't been one major article about the medical effects of uranium or depleted uranium in the New York Times or the Washington Post. Or in any of the major newspapers, FOX and CBS and all the rest are not covering it and without the media covering the medical effects of these issues, they are not going to be covered. Serious, very serious.



John LeKay: How about where you are in Australia?

Helen Caldicott: It's not being covered in Australia either.

John LeKay. It's not?

Helen Caldicott: No.

John LeKay. Do you know if any other parts of the world have covered it, like in England or Europe?

Helen Caldicott: There have been some articles in the European press; particularly because SOME Italian soldiers are returning from Iraq and developing cancers. So there's been a big outcry and an outcry in the European Parliament as well.

John LeKay: Have you seen the Italian RAI TV documentary of the use of white phosphorous in Fallujah?

Helen Caldicott: No, I haven't.

John LeKay: It's disturbing.

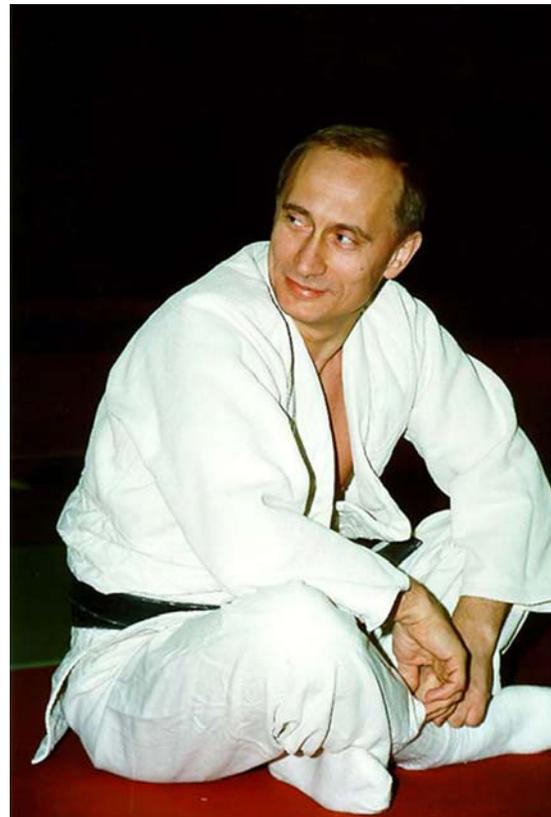
Helen Caldicott: I could imagine.

John LeKay: . What would the ramifications be, if the US were to use a missile on Iraq, Iran, North Korea?

Helen Caldicott: You mean a nuclear weapon?

John LeKay: Yes.

Helen Caldicott: Well it Could trigger a nuclear war between Russia and America and destroy most life on the planet. That's what it would do. Russia PRESENTLY targets America with two and a half thousand H bombs and America targets Russia with OVER FIVE THOUSAND H bombs, on hair trigger alert, AND there's a three minute decision time for either Putin or Bush to decide whether to destroy all life on earth. So, any nuclear weapon used anywhere in the world would produce such anxiety and destabilization and paranoia that the buttons could be pressed accidentALLY or BECAUSE of a state of anxiety. So things are very very tenuous at the moment on the planet



John LeKay: You mean with what's going on in the Middle East?

Helen Caldicott: It's nothing ABOUT what's going on with Iraq or Iran. It's about American policy. Iraq has no nuclear weapons, never did, and Iran has none and ACCORDING TO THE International Atomic Energy Agency it is 5 to 10 years away from making them. So all America wants to do is go in and bomb Iran - to get it's oil.

John LeKay : It's all about the oil?

Helen Caldicott: Yes, and if you go to a website called "Project for a New American Century". It's called **Project for the New American Century** and download it. This project was written by Wolfowitz and Cheney and Rumsfeld and Libby and the likes.

Five years ago, six years ago and the plans to go in and bomb Iran and Iraq are all there and Syria. So they have been planning to do this for about six years.

John LeKay: Have you been more able to speak out about these issues In Australia?

Helen Caldicott: Well, I've just had a major



article printed in the Melbourne Age about nuclear power, so that was good and when my book comes out in July - I'm hoping to get a lot of publicity for it so I'll be able to talk about the RENEWED US PUSH FOR nuclear power and the uranium mining in Australia. I think the book will be a great help.

For more info please visit

www.helencaldicott.com

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