

Alliant Techsystems Profits Increase with War

by Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan and John LaForge

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Alliant Techsystems (ATK), an Edina, Minnesota-based weapons manufacturer, reported a 32% jump in first quarter earnings from the previous year. The war against Iraq and the ongoing military campaign in Afghanistan have helped pad ATK's bank account. ATK is the largest supplier of munitions to the Pentagon, including large- and small-caliber munitions employing depleted uranium penetrators and rocket motors for missiles.

Alliant has supplied the Pentagon with millions of depleted uranium shells, most of which were machined and assembled at the Twin City Army Ammunition Plant in Arden Hills, Minnesota. The DU penetrator inside the shells is composed of uranium-238, a radioactive, alpha-emitting metallic toxic waste left over from the uranium "enrichment" process. The inhalation or ingestion of DU particles can lead to kidney problems, birth defects, cancers, and other serious health problems.

In December 2003, ATK was awarded a \$71.5 million subcontract from Lockheed Martin to produce solid propulsion

systems for all three stages of the Navy's Trident II /D5 fleet ballistic missile. Each D5 missile can carry up to 14 independently targetable, 475-kiloton thermonuclear warheads.

ATK is currently developing the XM-29, which it claims is a lightweight assault rifle that allows soldiers to shoot around corners. It has been the largest producer of CBU-87 cluster bombs. The \$2 billion company receives 75% of its revenue from the U.S. government.

Alliant's Uranium Pollution Exposed

In *Touching Bases*, the newsletter of the Military Toxics Project, Dr. Christine Ziebold reports on Alliant Techsystem's depleted uranium pollution at the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) in Arden Hills, Minn. Ziebold found that the NRC and the federal EPA have ignored staggering amounts of uranium releases to the Metropolitan Sewer System, claiming that DU was "not a contaminant of concern," and that there was "no reason to suspect a release of DU." In fact, government reports show that as much as 100 lbs.-per-year were disposed of in the sewer system, and that thousands of pounds of solid DU waste were collected in drums around the site, during at least ten years of 120mm and 30mm DU shell production. Alliant and its predecessor Honeywell had a NRC license to possess up to 750,000 kilograms (1.6 million lbs.) of DU at the site.

ACTION: Join Alliant ACTION in their ninth year of vigiling vigil at ATK headquarters, 5050 Lincoln Drive, (take the 5th St. exit off Hwy 169) Edina, Minn. every Wednesday at 7 a.m.



Depleted uranium shells, some made by Alliant

PROTEST & RESIST

Missile Motors, Machine Guns, Depleted Uranium, Landmines

**War Begins Here,
War Ends Here**

**Nonviolent direct action
Monday, March 14, 2005**

at 7:00 a.m.

**Alliant Techsystems
Edina, Minn.**

Midwest Catholic Worker retreat to precede action;
time and place t.b.a.

**Contact Molly or Jerry at
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Iraq's Provisional Government Seeks DU Cleanup; U.S. Denies Risks

The White House's handpicked government in Iraq has surprisingly asked the UN for help in cleaning up radioactive metallic uranium dust spread across the country by U.S. and British forces during their 1991 and 2003-04 bombardments, the Hartford, Connecticut, *Courant* reports.

The Pentagon continues to insist that depleted uranium (DU) contamination from exploded munitions does not pose a significant health threat. *Counterpunch* magazine reports that the U.S. has no plans to remove debris left from DU ammunition and refuses to permit Iraq to import the cleanup equipment needed to decontaminate target sites. Britain has provided the UN with coordinates where its forces used DU in southern Iraq, but the U.S. has not. The UN says it needs the maps for an effective investigation.

Neither British nor U.S. authorities have offered to augment the \$4.7 million donated to the UN mainly by Japan to evaluate the wartime DU contamination that health experts say threaten the well-being of Iraqi civilians.

On October 19, Army Lt. Col. Mark Melanson said a five-year, \$6 million Pentagon study shows, "The chemical risks of breathing in uranium dust are so low that it won't cause any long-term health risks," even for the tank crew. Dr. Michael Kilpatrick, of the military's Deployment Health Support Directorate, summed up the study results with straight-faced Pentagonese, telling the *New York Times*, "This is a lethal but safe weapons system."