



By Frida Berrigan, Senior Research Associate with the Arms Trade Resource Center of the New School University's World Policy Institute.

TRW is responsible for the following "Missile Defense" (MD) programs:

- ◆ National MD Battle Management Command, Control & Communications
- ◆ Theater MD family of systems synergy across the full spectrum of MD systems.
- ◆ Teamed with Raytheon for the Program Definition Risk Reduction phase of the Space-Based Infrared System Low program.
- ◆ Designing/developing and providing ground support for the Air-Based Laser system's Chemical Oxygen Iodine Laser.
- ◆ TRW also supports Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) Joint National Test Facility.

You Got to Give to Get

In the last ten years, as TRW solidified its position as one of the Big Four weapons contractors, its political giving has steadily increased, more than doubling since 1990. From 1990 through 2002, TRW donated more than \$2 million to members of Congress. Between 1997 and 1999, TRW spent more than \$3 million on lobbyists in Washington.

TRW has friends in high places. Vice President Dick Cheney, who was Defense Secretary under Bush Sr., sat on TRW's board. During the 2000 campaign, Cheney recalled that as a congressman "I supported every weapons bill that came down the pike."

Redefining War

TRW's research lab is developing handheld computers for infantry soldiers. The so-called Force 21 Battle Command Brigade and Below is a computer designed to tell soldiers exactly where they are, where they should go and where the enemy is. These computers, linked to satellites, and to remote command and control rooms:

"tap the video game skills of young soldiers, enabling them to instantly pinpoint their position, find enemies and aim weapons."

"We are redefining war," says Col. John Antal, of the 16th Calvary Regiment in Ft. Knox, Kentucky. With a \$57 million contract from the Pentagon, TRW has produced 2,000 units and has received another \$47 million for 1,600 more (i.e., \$28,500 each). The Pentagon hopes that eventually these devices, no larger than a palm pilot, will be standard issue to all infantry soldiers. TRW hopes so too.

Conflict of Interest

Bechtel replaced TRW Environmental Safety Systems, a subsidiary of TRW, as the prime contractor at the Yucca Mountain site in February 2001 after allegations that Yucca Mountain managers were biased and cozy with the nuclear industry. Yucca Mountain, 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada, is a possible repository for 77,000 tons of nuclear waste.

In January 2001, the Department of Energy initiated an investigation of TRW's management of Yucca Mountain that centers on a TRW internal memo and report for the DOE. In the report, TRW asserts that

"all evidence to date indicates that Yucca Mountain is suitable for a [nuclear] repository."

TRW stressed that the nuclear waste dump would be safe for 10,000 years, despite the fact that none of the safety studies on Yucca Mountain have been completed and the safety standards upon which such judgements would be made have not even been set yet. The accompanying cover letter implied that the report could be used as a political lobbying tool to advocate the construction of a high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, saying:

"the overview presents a Yucca Mountain repository as the key component in DOE's proposed solution to the nuclear waste problem."

Representative Shelley Berkeley (D-

NV) called the report part of TRW's "pattern of deception" to accelerate the process of bringing nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain and observed that:

"It is unconscionable, if not illegal, for DOE to employ contractors who make irresponsible recommendations before the scientific research of Yucca Mountain is completed."

Senator Henry Reid (D-NV) concurred saying that TRW's report revealed "deception and a lack of judgment."

Consumer Products

TRW Inc., the No. 2 maker of airbags, eliminated 1,000 jobs at the company's automotive unit, hoping to lower expenses by about \$40 million a year. TRW's automotive division also makes braking systems, steering and suspension systems, as well as electronic safety and security systems. About 64% of TRW's sales, which totaled \$17.2 billion last year, came from automotive parts, and the remainder from space and military products.

Mercenary Army

TRW subsidiary Vinnell built the beloved and historic Dodger Stadium. But it has a dark side too. In 1975, a Pentagon official described the company, which had 5,000 employees in Vietnam, as "our own little mercenary army."

For the last 22 years, Vinnell's most lucrative contract has been with the Saudi Arabian National Guard. According to journalist Ken Silverstein, Vinnell:

"protects [the] royal family from internal unrest and guards strategic oil installations."

Vinnell has about 1,000 employees in Saudi Arabia, including many retired U.S. Army Special Forces. Vinnell employees were deployed in Saudi units during the Gulf War and received bonus pay for hazardous duty.

Source: Prepared for the Arms Trade Resource Center of the World Policy Institute, New York, using data from TRW's website <www.trw.com>, Eureka County Yucca Mountain Information Office <www.yuccamountain.org> and Citizen Alert of Nevada <www.igc.apc.org/citizenalert>

Editor's Note: TRW was purchased by Northrop Grumman in December 2002.