RECEIVED
OCT 21 1999

4 MR. LAWSON: Our next speaker is Susan
5 Alzner, to be followed by Eileen Supko and Ed
6 Arnold.
7 MS. ALZNER: That's kind of tough to follow.
8 I'm the director of a nonprofit organization,
9 along with my friend Leigh Lytle. And we did a
10 bike ride across the country this summer to try to
11 raise awareness about environmental injustice, and
1 12 we considered this nuclear-waste transportation to
13 Yucca Mountain repository project to be the
14 greatest environmental injustice that our nation
15 faces. I can tell you that as we traveled, we met
16 with hundreds, thousands of people the whole way
17 -- it was a two-month trip -- and that not one
18 person knew about this project, not one, no one
19 that we met. And no one wanted it, not a single
20 one. So I've been listening to the proceedings.
21 And I kind of just went out in the hallway and I
22 wrote this, and I'm just going to start reading
23 some of the things that I was thinking in response
24 to all this.
2 25 The main point of transporting this waste to
(continues next page)

2 (continued)

1 Yucca Mountain at such an expense not only in
2 terms of money but also, undeniably, in terms of
3 life would be for the reason that the mountain
4 would provide the best conditions to enhance the
5 containment system we can engineer. No study I
6 have read indicates that this is the case. A very
7 reputable organization, Institute for Energy and
8 Environmental Research, in Washington, D.C., has
9 published a lengthy report on the unsuitability of
10 Yucca Mountain as a geological repository. Popular
11 Mechanics printed a feature article on the great
12 weaknesses inherent in a repository project. I do
13 not feel a need to go into the specifics of these
14 studies because I am sure you are already aware of
15 them. I would, instead, like to simply offer the
3 16 observation that the wisest engineering approach
17 would be to use a system that we can monitor in
18 perpetuity; in other words, above-ground on-site
19 storage at the facilities where the waste has been
20 created instead of burial at a facility that will
21 be filled up after 100 years, never to be checked
22 again. "Out of sight, out of mind" is clearly not
23 an intelligent approach. We should rethink the
24 meaning of out of sight, out of mind. If we put
25 this waste out of sight, we are clearly out of our

2

1 minds. Okay. Your whole process has been
2 characterized by this "out of sight, out of mind"
3 approach.

4 There is not an open flow of information to
5 the entire populace of this country. I have
6 thoroughly dedicated myself for the past two years
7 to finding information on this subject and have
8 managed to achieve only somewhat of the level of
9 understanding I would like. And I am not a slow
10 learner; I went to Yale. You are so proud of
11 yourselves for holding this and a handful of other
12 meetings nationwide for public comments, and you
13 barely publicize them and answer questions
14 incompletely. This is a huge project that affects
15 the entire nation, and you are asking us not only
16 to accept your minimal efforts to educate us about
17 it but also to pay for it.

18 At this stage of my investigation I find
19 myself much more interested in what you're not
20 saying than what you have said in your DEIS.
21 Everything I come to understand about this Yucca
22 Mountain repository proposal and the associated
23 nuclear fuel site is horrifying. Here are some
24 things I have learned from sources outside the DOE
25 and from personal experience. Nationwide, there

5 (continues next page)

5 (continued)

1 have been approximately 100,000 accidents
2 involving hazardous wastes over the past ten
3 years, which resulted in over $300 million of
4 damages, over 4,000 minor injuries, over 350 major
5 injuries and approximately 100 deaths. The
6 statistics for Georgia within this are 3,029
7 accidents, 12 major injuries, 104 minor ones, one
8 death and $8,033,769 in damages. I think I've
9 just provided more information about the potential
10 transportation risks to Georgia of your program
11 than you have. And I'm not even from here; I'm
12 from Connecticut.

6

13 Your own DOE study as part of the 1986
14 environmental assessment for the Yucca Mountain
15 repository site warns that a scenario involving a
16 high-speed impact, long-duration fire and fuel
17 oxidation would contaminate a 42-square mile area,
18 require 462 days to clean up and cost $620
19 million. You cannot tell me that you can
20 guarantee me no fires longer than a half an hour.
21 You may as well claim to be God. I can tell you

7 (continues next page)

22 that Radioactive Waste Management Associates in
23 New York have presented me with facts about your
24 casks that you have not. They are only built to
25 withstand impact speeds of up to 30 miles per

7 (continued)

1 hour; and you admit to the fact they can only
2 withstand temperatures of 1,400 degrees, but
3 diesel fuel burns at around 1,800 degrees. And
4 there was a famous fire that resulted from a truck
5 accident in a tunnel that attained this
6 temperature.
7 During our bike trip we visited a town called
8 Vaughn, New Mexico, which was the transportation
9 junction and was receiving shipments from the WIPP
10 facility presently. With regard to emergency
11 response in that particular case, the fire
12 department -- We stayed in the building with the
13 fire department on our trip. We stayed up at
14 night, and we talked to the guys who manned the
15 phones. Their emergency response training involved
16 being presented with a package that contained a
17 white paper suit which involved gloves, a hood,
18 booties, a dust mask and duct tape so they could
19 seal off closures. That was it; that's all they
20 got from WIPP. They're hoping to get a new
21 ambulance and a doctor and a fire truck, and that
22 is why they are agreeing to nuclear-waste
23 transportation.
24 MR. LAWSON: Thirty seconds, please.
25 MS. ALZNER: Okay. The movement of this most

8 (continues next page)

8 (continues below)

9

8 (continues below)

8 (continues next page)

10

1 lethal manmade substance on earth would undeniably
2 be detrimental to our environment. Does it not
3 occur to you as individuals that our environment
4 is our source of life, whereas the nuclear
5 industry is a source of death? There is no true
6 need to move this waste other than for political
7 or economic reasons. Those casks are much better
8 able to contain political problems than the highly
9 dangerous radioactive wastes they are designed
10 for. And the movement of the waste would not only
11 result in the creation of another contaminated
12 site, it would not create -- it would not -- I'm
13 sorry. And the movement of the waste would only
14 result in the creation of another contaminated
15 site; it would not create centralized storage.
16 Now it's on the table also that there is every
17 intention to create a second national repository.
18 When does the expansion end?
19 I just have one more paragraph. Someone said
20 that we should not let emotions cloud science.
21 How many of you here have come face to face with
22 death? I and a couple of friends did, just the
23 other day, in a car wreck that sent us tumbling in
24 a whirl of crashing metal and breaking glass
25 within our steadily shrinking vehicle cage. I can

tell you that you will not have science on your mind as you stand before death, and statistics will not speak to your present circumstance. No; your emotions will take over, and then they will provide the most accurate measure of life. At that moment they will bring the ultimate clarity of what is truly important in life, and I can guarantee you that you will not think it is your car or your house or a great nuclear waste repository. No; you will be concerned about your life force and your friends and family. It is extremely terrifying to stand a foot from death and feel the real possibility that you will not see the sun or anyone you love again.

8 (continues next page)

The nuclear industry puts thousands of people into close proximity to death on a regular basis, and this Yucca Mountain project will bring death on a 30-year tour through our nation's communities. Why do you want to perpetuate the technology and industry that is known to bring destruction to lives and, thereby, friendships and families? Choose technologies and make decisions that are oriented toward the preservation of life. Recognition of nuclear waste as the gravestone of the nuclear industry that it is will allow us to

9

8 (continued from previous)

move on to truly life sustaining and sustainable energy technologies. Leave the nuclear waste gravestones with their dying nuclear plants so that we can rest with the knowledge that our children and future generations can live in peace. Thank you.

MS. SWEENEY: Thank you.

MR. LAWSON: Our next speaker is Eileen Supko, to be followed by Ed Arnold and Pat Ortmeyer.

8