

DEC 02 1999

MS. BACKLUND: Yes. My name is Kaitlin Backlund. I'm the State Director of Citizen Alert.

Somehow I feel like I'm talking to an empty audience here.

A couple of comments I would like to make. I'll be making more formal comments in the future.

7

However, I think it's really important that we just heard the voices of some of the children in the State of Nevada. They ask questions from the heart. They ask questions from what they read and from what they have been taught.

I think it's really critical that this process is an open process. It's very intimidating to come up here and speak into a microphone, look into a couple of empty chairs. We have one gentleman up here in front of us. So I commend their ability to be able to come forward and say what's on their minds.

1

There is a couple of concerns that I have. One of them is from the question and answer period that took place, was that discussion about the fact that I have heard this plenty of times, that isn't it wonderful that we're going to be consolidating the waste from 77 sites into one site. And I question whether or not those 77 sites are going to be radioactive free.

Are those 77 sites no longer going to be considered hazardous sites? Is all the radiation going to be cleaned up from those sites? That is going to take a really long time. I think it's a spin on information, and I don't think it's accurate.

We have heard a lot about transportation. I think that's been well addressed.

2

Some of the things that we haven't heard as accurately is the whole fact that the whole process here does not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. We do not, from what I saw in the presentation from Miss Wendy Dixon from the Department of Energy, we do not see that this EIS has to look at reasonable alternatives. That's very interesting considering that every other single Environmental Impact Statement in the country has to look at

(1)

2 reasonable alternatives. |
continued

3 | We do have a couple alternatives in here, but they are
hardly reasonable. Thinking that we're going to leave the waste where
it is, for the next 10,000 years, without doing any modifications to
it at all, that's not a reasonable alternative. There is nobody
working on this issue nationally that opposes Yucca Mountain that
thinks that leaving it on site unattended or just as it is is
reasonable. Nobody is promoting that. |

4 | Leaving it on site in dry cask storage for approximately
a hundred years while we perhaps transfer the funds from the nuclear
waste fund out of Yucca Mountain, a white elephant in this case, and
put it into some sound scientifically defensible research to come up
5 with a real solution about this. | This was a politically expedient
process that is bringing the repository to this state.

It is inappropriate, it's not scientifically based. Even
as the science is going on down at Yucca Mountain, we're finding that
the science is accommodating the site. The guidelines that were
initially set up to protect the health and safety of Nevada's
environment and Nevada's residents have all been adjusted to
accommodate the site. That's not what this process is about.

We were supposed to have a scientific study to assess
whether or not Yucca Mountain could meet the guidelines that were set
forth as being the guidelines that would protect the people of this
country. That's not what's happening here. |

6 | It's almost as if there is so much momentum, there is so
much money that has gone into this, that we're going to just push
forward on this process, regardless. But I would like to venture to
say that if we were to abandon the Yucca Mountain process, it would
not be the first time that the federal government had dumped billions
of dollars down into something that wasn't viable. |

At this point I'd like to defer and hear what other
Nevadans have to say about this process. Thank you for the time.

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