EIS001455

MAINLINING NUCLEAR WASTE INTO THE VEINS OF AMERICA

(Should we haul ionizing radioactive waste from all over the world and the country and dump it in the ground at Yucca Mountain?)

To: Ms. Wendy r. Dixon, EIS Project Manager
M/S 010
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1 ... Even though the Department of Energy has "suggested" (not "directed", as that might create liability on DOE's part) to eastern waste haulers that they bypass the Las Vegas Valley when shipping waste to the Nevada storage site, and instead go through **San Bernardino County** over to Barstow on Highway 40, then back up towards Nevada on I-15 to Baker, and north to the site, and even though ionizing radioactive waste will be traversing the entire breadth of San Bernardino County from the soon-to-be dismantled San Onofre nuclear power plant, the Diablo Canyon plant, and from Asia, (brought into the country through the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, up the Alameda Corridor, and out the I-10 freeway to I-15), and even though the citizens of San Bernardino County will be exposed to high and "low" level radioactive waste flowing through their communities night and day by rail and truck (and possibly plane), still, the U.S. Department of Energy has not seen fit to hold any public hearings in San Bernardino County by this February 9, 2000, final cut-off date for submission of public comment.

I heard yesterday that, at the urging of Senator Barbara Boxer, (*Thank you, Senator Boxer*) a public hearing will be held on 2/22/00 at San Bernardino. I hope that written comments of our overlooked county's citizens will be

1 accepted for consideration by DOE, up to and including that date. I have made that inquiry to the department and heard nothing to the contrary. Therefore, I am assuming February 22nd will be the new final date for submission.

I will submit amplified comments by that date. I would like here to simply recount a dream I had on or about Martin Luther King's birthday.

I dreamed the United States was a huge female body, and its roads and rails were her veins, carrying the lifeblood of the mother-country. I dreamed that evil greedy men were injecting those veins from a syringe and needle full of radioactive waste, for their own private profit. The waste was making her, our precious mother-country sick, and the smell of death surrounded her. But she was addicted to the nuclear madness shot into her blood—she thought she had to have nuclear power, nuclear bombs, enriched uranium, radiated food, radiation in hospitals, because the rich powerful corporations, the pimps, controlled her, and kept her doped up so she no longer had liberty to make wise choices.

Then I woke up. And sure enough—the rich powerful corporations want to fill our highways and rails with shipments of nuclear waste from all over the county and the world so they can bury it at Yucca Mountain, and remove it far away from the places where **they made it**. They have earned their millions, and billions. "Now take the waste away from here!" People will know it was us who contaminated their soil, their air, their water, their genes, their offspring, caused their cancer, killed their mother, their aunt, their sister, their child. We could be held liable!

If we spread it everywhere, ***we can increase the background radiation everywhere!*** No one will ever be able to prove it was us who did it. They won't know. It might have been the stainless steel in her braces or baby carriage from the recycled power plant. It might have been the leaks in the casks in the truck in the lane next to the family car on its way to Vegas. It might have been the daily trains coming through on the tracks across the fence, carrying loads of waste emitting **silent death,** poisons one cannot see, smell, feel, hear, or taste. Maybe it will be next year that the lump is found. Perhaps it will not happen for five or ten years. But the cancer will come. And when it does **you will never be able to show "proximate cause"**. Not against Lockheed Martin. Not against Bechtel, or Westinghouse, or the University of California, or G.E., or Los Alamos, or the United States Government, who in

the name of protecting the peace, in the name of defending democracy, in the name of Progress, is killing us.

So, I see in the EIS, at page 2-69, paragraph 2.3.1, several disposal concepts were considered:

We could rocket it to the sun! We could dump it in the ocean! Let's put it in the polar ice sheets—that won't do anything about global warming will it? But in the end, the National Academy of Science and Congress said the *sensible* thing—"Energy Department, you just look at one alternative—Yucca Mountain."

2 Sure, that's a great idea! Yucca Mountain is on Shoshone Land. Just a bunch of Indians—we can buy 'em off or kill 'em off. Look how sick the Navajos are now, since we gave them all those great jobs mining uranium on their reservation. And you know those Indians down in Death Valley—the Timbisha Shoshones? They have been mad at us forever since we kicked them off their land—let's give them back some rights at Furnace Creek where the water is most likely to be contaminated with radiation. (The aquifer under Yucca Mountain site is at or near Furnace Creek Ranch. "The heat from the decay of radionuclides in the waste would cause temperatures in the rock near the disposal containers to rise above the boiling point of water" for a few hundred years to a few thousand years. P. S-41 to 42). Boy, Furnace Creek is going to be the right name for that place alright! We can direct the trucks to come north from Baker on Hwy. 127 right through Death Valley, so they don't need to go through Las Vegas. The Indians will love those jobs—they can sell turquoise to the nuclear waste truckers.

3 Well, what about the fact that Yucca Mountain is right on two intersecting earthquake faults—the "Ghostdance" fault and the "Sundance" fault? Aw, shucks, their ain't been an earthquake in those parts since 1992, and it was only 5.6 on the Richter scale and it was centered at Little Skull Mountain—that's 12 whole miles away—it "caused no detectable in tunnels at either the Yucca Mountain site or the Nevada Test Site." (P. S-37)

4 ... By now, everyone knows that under the site at Ward Valley, where the government wanted to dump "low level" radioactive waste, is the largest groundwater aquifer in the state, containing an estimated thirty million acre feet of water. But how did that water get there? The Native Americans, who have been there for thousands of years, say the Amargosa River, which the E.I.S. sloughs off as if it is meaningless because it is mostly a dry river bed, used to be

4 above ground. It went underground during a massive earthquake, which made a big crevasse, and caused the river to sink, and water to be trapped in the rock formations beneath the ground. And the report is correct—the groundwater flow system is very complex, and there is **scientific uncertainty** about the groundwater flow boundaries. To put it correctly, they don't have a clue where that water runs underground, and how the emissions from the buried nuclear waste is going to migrate underground.

Forked-tongued talk, like "the depth to groundwater and the arid environment would combine to reduce the potential for meaningful contaminant migration" (at P. S-41) is meaning*less* and deceitful. What is a *meaningful contaminant migration*?

5 Throughout the entire report, there is this attempt to minimize all of the impacts, as if it is being prepared by proponents hired to justify this proposal. There is only on animal living at the site that is a "threatened" species—and that's just the same old desert tortoise. But Yucca Mountain is at the north end of the tortoise's habitat, and lots more of those critters live other places—so what's the big deal? We'll minimize the impact. Other than that, all we have are bats, a lizard, an owl and a beetle. Okay, so there will be "small quantities of routine releases of radioactive materials from the repository". (What is a "routine" release?) But it's only Krypton and "naturally occurring radon" and the doses are just so small. Besides, we're disturbing such a small area of land.

6 I believe from the above you will conclude that I oppose the project, and prefer No-Action Scenario #1, of the options you mentioned. Some people have stated it, "You make it, you keep it." And that includes the liability. I do not want it on the freeway going through my town. I suggest that each site be entombed with concrete, as giant monuments to the arrogant folly of man. I suggest we stop generating nuclear waste until we have more reasonable alternatives than shooting it into the sun, throwing it into the ocean, or burying it in the land.

More later.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marjorie M. Mikels

MARJORIE MUSSER MIKELS