

RECEIVED

EIS001476

23 JAN 13 2000 MR. BROWN: Thanks very much. Our next speaker
24 is Cynthia ofthedesert.

25 MS. OFTHEDESERT: My name is Cynthia

115

1 ofthedesert. I represent Utah Peace Test. It's an
2 antinuclear activist group. We've been around for 12
3 years in Utah. We're involved in supporting --

4 MR. BROWN: Can you speak just a little louder
5 for the court reporter and others? Thanks very much.

6 MS. OFTHEDESERT: We've also been involved in
7 supporting members of the Goshute tribe who do not want
8 the low-level nuclear waste dump, and of course we've been
9 interested in Yucca Mountain from the beginning. I've
10 walked that land. It's beautiful out there. It's also
11 Shoshone land.

12 And this is the most important thing that is
13 brushed over. I noted finally after reading a lot of
14 these things over ten years. This is just the summary,
15 but I've read most of words, endless, endless words that
16 have been printed all these years about Yucca Mountain.
17 And I did note that this time the Shoshone tribe has been
18 actually mentioned in there. But it's a brush-off. You
19 know, this is tribal land, and it's real easy for people
20 here tonight who are not particularly belonging to a tribe

21 who don't have that concept to not really understand the
22 basic necessity of this.

1...

23 Department of Energy does not own this land.
24 The United States does not own this land. The Shoshone
25 Tribe, Western Shoshone tribe, they used to call the area

116

1 across Nevada "Newe Sogobia." It's amazing to me that --
2 there's a whole list of reasons why Yucca Mountain nuclear
3 waste repository should not be put in there, but the
4 bottom line is you can't do it because it's not owned.

5 That property is not owned by the United States
6 Government.

7 On page S-65 is a summary. Under Areas of
8 Controversy -- ooh! -- it states that the Native American
9 tribes in the region, they believe that the region's
10 water, animals, plants, air, geology, and artifacts are
11 interrelated and dependent on each other for existence.

12 Well, how else could it be? If you speak from a
13 physics background, which I do have, everything is
14 connected. Doesn't matter whether you use real technical
15 language or language that most of people can understand,
16 everything is connected. Only it seems to be just brushed
17 off or, well, we'll give a nod to it. But this is
18 important and I want this to be in the public record, and

19 I want people here to really understand this.

20 This has been referred to already by two of the
21 tribal members who are here, the Goshute and the Western
22 Shoshone. But the truth of the matter is, in our history,
1... 23 whether we like it or not, in the United States we have
24 systematically practiced genocide on the people who have
25 lived here before us. This is just the latest example.

117

1 This is the latest example of it, and it's not right, and
2 if even one of you goes home tonight with a different
3 point of view or even think about it, I'm glad.

4 The treaty of Ruby Valley of 1863 was the only
5 treaty that was written by the United States that was
6 actually honored, and it covers this area that Yucca
7 Mountain is proposed to be put into. The United States
8 Government tried to purchase part of that land for the
9 Nevada Test Site, which is right next to the proposed
10 waste dump area, and I just want this -- I just want
11 people to really think about this. Well, hey, I don't
12 want it in my back yard. Well, it's okay if we truck it
13 through all the 43 possible out of the 50 United States to
14 get it to somebody else's back yard. Somebody else?

...1 15 Well, they're people like you and us, all of us. They
16 have children, you have children, I have a child.

17 This is not right. After having said that, I'm
2 18 going to go straight to the DEIS. [And as a scientific
19 background, this document bothers me greatly because
20 it's -- there are so many instances of imprecise language.
21 That's not really good to be using in scientific studies.
22 Things like "unlikely" and "probably" and "maybe" and
23 "computer models," and not a lot of facts are presented
24 here. There's a lot of supposition, and this is what
25 we're going to base this on. That bothers me a great

118

[1 deal.

2 It's been repeatedly said, but I'll say it also,
3 [3 of all places in the United States, I mean, there are 33
4 known faults, several of which run right through Yucca
5 Mountain, earthquake faults. It's very high volcanic
6 activity.

7 Oh, I forgot to mention, June '92 there was a
8 5.2 on the Richter Scale earthquake there. This is
9 madness. How -- the biggest word I can think of that I
10 have gone to all these hearings and read all this material
11 for years, it's denial. People are in denial. The
12 "science" that's used, if you can use that word, is real
13 malleable, imprecise. What we do know is brushed over.
14 [This is the craziest place on the planet to put the stuff.

4 15 I also want to mention that it's not an isolated
16 area. It's not desolate. Within a 20-mile radius there
17 are about 50,000 people. If there was, like the DOE
18 scientists themselves in 1995 reported that high-level
19 radioactive waste in the repository could reach -- Well,
20 there goes all these people. And then what about the rest
21 of the people downwind, and what about you and what about
22 your children?

23 You know, I'm not being unscientific. Just
24 saying, look, these facts are just brushed over. There's
25 many, many words just in this summary, a lot of which I

119

1 actually don't understand. I don't know if you've read
2 the 13 pounds of the whole deal here, the whole DEIS, but
3 because there is pressure to do something, I really
4 believe that we are acting in haste. And I say "we"
5 because the taxpayers pay for all of this, and it's
6 running into unimaginable money.

5 7 There are safety risks to the workers, there are
8 transportation risks. I'm really glad the State of Utah
9 stood up tonight. And the casks have only been marginally
10 tested, mostly computer models. Who in the world is going
11 to pay the estimated six hundred million to two hundred
12 billion dollars -- I said billion -- in the costs,

13 depending on whether it's rural or urban -- that means,
6 14 oh, the cows or the people, you know. | What happens if
15 there's a huge spill? Who pays for the costs? | The state
16 of Utah or any of the other states, that is, oh, on the
17 way from back east, from perhaps the PFS involvement?
7 18 Hey, who pays for all of that? | Never mind paying the
19 death currently and then the cancer rates on down the
20 road. Who pays for that?

21 There's nothing in here that talks about that.
22 There's nothing that covers that. I mean, the routes may
23 go through 43 states. Most of them are densely populated
24 areas, especially Utah. | That was totally covered by
25 Ms. Nielson.

120

8... | 1 This is not anywhere near a summary. I realize
2 the pressure is to do something about it, to put it
3 somewhere. But I want to quote one other place here.
4 It's in the proposed no-action alternative. Now, if no
5 action means leaving it where it is, the DOE's response
6 is, there could be large public health and environmental
7 consequences if there were no effective institutional
8 control causing storage facilities and containers to
9 deteriorate, and it goes on. But, you know, in those 72
10 facilities, 77 total, why can't the same technology that

11 is being expounded for Yucca Mountain be used right where
12 those facilities are? Some of this technology could be
13 used. If they're saying it's going to be safe at Yucca
14 Mountain, why can't it be safe right where it is? | Instead
15 of going through everybody's back yard, and literally back
16 yard, you know, this makes absolutely no sense to me, and
17 I will say crazy again. This doesn't need to happen.

9 | 18 And I think one of the biggest problems that our
19 government has is admitting that they made a mistake --
20 gee, okay, this didn't work, let's go back and try
21 something else. There is no rush. I realize, because
22 I've done a lot of studying, that a lot of those
23 commercial sites are having problems. But it's problems
24 of their own making, but we are all culpable because in
25 those areas people live with that power. |

121

1 MR. BROWN: If you can wrap it up, please, here.

2 MS. OFTHEDESERT: I will, right now.

3 MR. BROWN: You're welcome to come back.

4 MS. OFTHEDESERT: I don't need to.

5 MR. BROWN: Okay.

...8 | 6 MS. OFTHEDESERT: The technology that's being
7 proposed for Yucca Mountain can be used I believe at the
8 commercial sites, and I think that's a good short-term

9 possibility to at least consider, for the DOE to consider
10 right now instead of transporting it in casks that have
11 not been tested at all in reality check situations.

10

12 And so in summary, I'd like to say that the
13 whole situation is unconscionable. I hope that
14 everybody's voice will be heard. I hope they're not just
15 filed in the next summary and not acknowledged, because
16 very few comments over all the years have by people have
17 ever really translated into anything of value. The
18 Department of Energy has gone on to exactly what it wants
19 to do and, you know, I encourage people to question that,
20 question your government. It is your government. Offer
21 solutions or suggestions if you have them. But at least
22 stand up and say something isn't working. Don't make up
23 little "well, maybe's" and "oh, probably's," and
24 "unlikely's," which this entire document is full of.

25 So that's what I have to say. Think about it

122

1 and make this work for you. You are the people here.
2 This doesn't mean you have to make the DOE a big evil.
3 These are all individually wonderful people. I actually
4 know some of these people here. I've seen them a few
5 years. But it means the institution. If something isn't
6 working, fix it. Don't gloss it over. Don't say, well,

7 we've got to do this because we're mandated to do this.
8 The mandate was originally to find a solution, not to
9 create one that was going to contaminate everybody. Thank
10 you.