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MR. BRIERTY: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm Peter Brierty; I am the Fire Marshal for the County of San Bernardino as well as the Division Chief for the Hazardous Materials Division for the County of San Bernardino.

1... For the past several years the County of San Bernardino has applied for grants to provide training and equipment for responses to the use of weapons of mass destruction. Weapons of mass destruction, both chemical and nuclear and biological, may be used against society by terrorists.

The county and allied agencies have been working diligently to plan and prepare for such an unfortunate event, although no funding whatsoever has been forthcoming from the Federal government.

Now that we have the portent of transit of mass volumes and shipments of high-level radioactive waste through this county, it's highly ironic that if we were to respond to a massive release of radioactivity, it may well be from the actions of our own government.

2 The County of San Bernardino and the collective 24 city and district fire departments are ill-prepared -- let me rephrase that -- not prepared, to respond to a release of radioactive materials or waste of this predicted magnitude. There are questions as to the crash test studies that were performed on the casks as to whether they are adequate to withstand the rigors of our Cajon Pass.

3 Nevada State, with much more experience in radioactivity than I, has stated that there's misrepresentations in the radiologic hazards in spent fuel that would be transported, using a reference fuel that is less active than fuel types that would actually be shipped to the repository; that there was gross understatements of routine radiologic exposures along highway routes in Nevada; significantly understated consequences of severe transportation accidents and successful terrorist attacks resulting in release of radioactive materials.

The release scenarios are cataclysmic at best; from an acute exposure standpoint, a person standing one yard away from an unshielded ten-year-old fuel assembly would receive a lethal dose of radiation of 500 rem in less than three minutes. A 30-second exposure of 100 rem at one yard would significantly cause adverse health problems.

4 As you have heard stated previously today, last week we focused our attention on the top of the Cajon Pass with 58 cars, five big rigs, and a massive pile-up that it took hours to untangle. Not uncommon here. What many of us didn't see was that at about two o'clock on the same day a county fire employee was first on scene on Interstate 10 at another massive accident and began rendering aid to victims, our citizens, as cars continued to crash -- literally crash around him.

What that brings up is that under even DOT (sic) predictions, with an unopened cask one may receive 10 millirems per hour at 10 meters, which is approximately 5 percent of the annual average dose that one would expect naturally.

In the event of an accidental release, particulates would be borne by desert and Santa Ana wind conditions for many, many miles, and the inhalation hazard would be catastrophic.

The DOE itself claims that in an accidental release, a 42-square-mile area would be contaminated and require 460 days to decontaminate it, and cost over 620 million dollars.

5... What is the contingency plan? How will the responsive team be mobilized? Where are the workers to come from? To where will the victims be transported and how will they be housed during these days?

...5 How will 42 square miles and everything in it be decontaminated? In my brief 20 years cleaning up hazardous waste sites, I would expect decades, not 460 days.

6 On transportation issues, the maps in sequence show a northern route that is considered the primary route. Later in the documents it states the southern route would be less subject to weather.

Last year the Department of Energy completed an assessment that as a result of protests by Las Vegas, it showed the southern route through San Bernardino County is the preferred route for low-level radioactive waste. There are certain conditions that would make the Needles and Barstow corridor the primary route for both rail and highway shipments. At a minimum 6,250 shipments, at maximum, 9,600 shipments; that's nine every day for 39 years.

FACILITATOR HOLMES: Four-minute mark.

...1 MR. BRIERTY: As I initially stated, the county and the fire jurisdictions within, as well as the allied support services, are not equipped nor trained to respond to an incident, much less provide support to a federal team that I would hope would show up.

Most of the mileage traversed by this material, these shipments, is staffed by paid call and volunteer staff. They provide basic life support, basic response to fires. By no means are they trained as hazardous materials specialists; by no means are they radiation experts or health physicists and the like.

Those are the current concerns that I have, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak.

FACILITATOR HOLMES: Jay Lindberg. Okay? Jim Squire? To be followed by Robert Laurie. Is Jim Squire here? Okay. I'll come back to these.

Robert Laurie then. Welcome.