

OCT 19 2001

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11 MS. SNYDER: Again, my name is Susi Snyder.
12 I live in Pahrump, Nevada.
13 I'm very concerned with this Yucca Mountain
14 Project, and I have been for, ever since I first heard
15 about it, in 1997. Been attending meetings, many
16 meetings, given lots of comments over and over and over
17 again, asked lots of questions, and I have never had my
18 questions answered in a public forum and I'm very
19 disappointed about that. That's one of my big problems
20 with the project, is that the lack of public, of real
21 public, public interactions, and it's just that the way
22 the hearings have always been set up, where you can ask
23 questions but the questions don't go on the record.
24 Questions should have gone on the record all the way
25 through. And it's really disappointing to see that

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1 they haven't.
2 Also, to know that if you want to get a
3 question answered in this last set of hearings, if you
4 wanted a question answered, you couldn't do that from
5 the front of the room, you had to go to the back of the
6 room and talk to somebody one on one, and that's not

7 fair to communities who want to hear what other members
8 of their community are saying. That's a very important
9 aspect, especially in small communities like Amargosa
10 Valley and Pahrump, where we, we live with each other,
11 we know each other, we want to hear what each other are
12 talking about. We respect each other, we respect the
13 opinions of other people in our communities, and we
14 want to hear what our communities have to say.

15 We also want to hear their questions and hear
16 the answers and have those answers be on the record, so
17 that when it comes back, you know, five years from now,
18 10 years from now and we find out we were being lied to
19 once again, then it's on the record and we have some
20 proof of that instead of just a "he said, she said"
21 type of thing.

22 The issue of environmental justice -- I've
23 talked about this many times. The Yucca Mountain
24 Project is environmental racism. The Western Shoshones
25 hold title to the land. The Yucca Mountain Project

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1 won't be able to go through unless they can somehow
2 find and create title to that land because the Nuclear
3 Regulatory Commission process, the licensing

4 application requires that you show proof of ownership,
5 and that doesn't exist, so the project's going to fail
6 on that aspect.

7 Right now, there are no guidelines for the
8 Yucca Mountain -- there are guidelines, excuse me.
9 There are guidelines on the books for the Yucca
10 Mountain Project, and according to, according to those
11 guidelines, the project is not qualified, according to
12 the part 60 guidelines, and it's 462, paragraph 1,
13 which talks about water flow, and this one particular
14 part of it, the, the, through characterization, we've
15 learned how quickly water moves through the mountain,
16 which is not really a mountain, but a rolling hill.
17 And we know that it's, the, the site is wet. May be in
18 the desert, but it's a wet site. And one of the keys
19 in looking, in initially finding a site was to find a
20 dry site, and this is not a dry site.

21 This violation of -- I'll go back to again of
22 the Treaty of Ruby Valley. It's also a violation of
23 international law, including Article 24 of the United
24 Nations Charter, which, you know, prohibits genocide
25 which is what Yucca Mountain is. It's, right now it's

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1 preventing, it's preventing the Western Shoshone
2 people, who have been gathering at that area in that
3 area for thousands and thousands of years, from
4 gathering at their traditional gathering site, which is
5 on the eastern side of Yucca Mountain. And because DOE
6 has closed off that area to them, they're now forced to
7 gather on the western side of the mountain, which they
8 have been doing, which they continue to do, which they
9 will continue to do if the project gets built. That is
10 a direct threat to these people to the continuation of
11 their culture. That is genocide. That's further --
12 it's a continuation of the culture of genocide which
13 this country was built on, which I strongly oppose.
14 87 percent of Nevadans oppose the Yucca
15 Mountain Project, according to UNLV poll a couple of
16 years ago, and that alone should, you know, send a
17 pretty good indication to the Secretary of what
18 Nevadans think about it. But not just Nevadans oppose
19 this project. There are people all over the United
20 States who oppose the Yucca Mountain Project, people
21 who live next to the reactor sites themselves who
22 oppose this project because they know that it's

23 dangerous. They will not, they are not willing to

24 create another sacrifice zone.

25 . . . They know that building Yucca Mountain will

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1 not get all of the waste out of their communities. It

2 will not shut their reactor down. But instead, will

3 just move the waste across the country endangering

4 millions of people along the transportation routes, at

5 the same time as continuing to contaminate their areas

6 at the reactors, as well as the areas, the, as well as

7 Yucca Mountain, and wherever there will be accidents

8 along the route.

9 . . . And we know there will be accidents. There

10 have been, you know, 25, something like 2,500 shipments

11 of spent, of nuclear, high-level nuclear material over

12 the last 25 years, and trying to do over, trying to do

13 about 1,000 shipments a year is an unprecedented number

14 of shipments, especially when right now we see that

15 there are problems with the waste isolation pilot --

16 with WIPP, in New Mexico, and problems with the simple

17 things like notification of the state of New Mexico,

18 which the Department of Energy's required to do, and,

19 in fact, it's been concerned, just on September 26th,

20 it was a concerned citizen that notified the state of
21 New Mexico about a shipment coming in, not DOE
22 Carlsbad. And that is a problem. If DOE can't notify
23 the state of New Mexico when shipments are coming in,
24 we have no trust that they will uphold any
25 responsibilities to the state of Nevada. So that's a

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1 really big issue.
2 Also, I'm looking at the Nuclear Waste Policy
3 Act right here, which says that the final Environmental
4 Impact Statement prepared for Yucca Mountain Site, you
5 know, blah, blah, blah, will -- excuse me -- the
6 Secretary -- the Secretary shall not be required in any
7 such Environmental Impact Statement to consider the
8 need for repository, the alternatives to geologic
9 disposal or alternative sites to the Yucca Mountain
10 Site. Does not say that the Environmental Impact
11 Statement should not consider a no-action alternative,
12 which the Draft Environmental Impact Statement did not
13 consider, did not do a reasonable job of considering a
14 no-action alternative.
15 In fact, it did a really lousy job of it
16 saying that the, people just walk away and, you know,

17 in less than 100 years, which is just ridiculous, we
18 know that people won't walk away from the, from the
19 sites. We know that there's this legacy has been
20 created. It was created before I was born. It's
21 something that I will deal with for the rest of my
22 life, for the rest of my children's life, for my
23 grandchildren's lives, my great-grandchildren's lives.
24 This is a legacy we've recreated in the last 50 years
25 which has changed the course of life on this planet as

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1 we know it, and it has, in fact, impacted it to such a
2 great deal that right now, in the Soviet Union, former
3 Soviet Union -- excuse me -- there are children,
4 there's such a high percentage of children being born
5 with birth defects, mutated, mutations and just a huge
6 instance of this, because there's so little information
7 about the different nuclear sites in that country,
8 nuclear weapons sites specifically, and about the, you
9 know, the water contamination, the air contamination in
10 those areas, and now we've seen what happens. We're
11 seeing the second generation of it. We'll be seeing
12 the third generation of it.

13 I'm a second generation nuclear citizen,

14 thanks to decisions that were made before I was born.

15 And it's not a legacy that I feel safe leaving for my

16 future generations. Unfortunately, all I can do is

17 teach them how to prevent it from coming into their,

18 prevent from it being moved and hopefully in my

19 lifetime will prevent, we will end the continued

20 production of this nuclear waste. And that's what I,

21 what I hope for, what I pray for because it's the only

22 thing that I can think to do. We have to to stop

23 making nuclear waste, nuclear material, high-level

24 nuclear waste, transuranic waste, low-level waste,

25 whatever you want to call this nuclear material, as

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1 long as we continue to make it, the idea of finding us

2 a centralized storage site is ridiculous, because

3 they'll just pile up and we'll, you know, where's the

4 second repository going to be, if it's not going to be

5 at Skull Valley?

6 And that's something that, you know, we want

7 the Secretary to recognize, that, too, you know, if

8 he's thinking, oh, well, if Yucca Mountain doesn't

9 work, we can ship it to the ISFSI site up in Skull

10 Valley. That's not going to happen either, because

11 again, it's, it's a racism thing. It's, it's a
12 genocide thing and it's a small Indian tribe trying to
13 be bought off and that's just not, it's just not going
14 to go there.

15 This, again, this entire process has been
16 real tricky for some of us. I live here. I live in
17 Nevada. I live in Pahrump. I do come into Las Vegas
18 pretty often. I came here into the Science Center
19 looking for a copy of the Preliminary Site Suitability
20 Evaluation Report, and was, this was on, this was about
21 five days after the Federal Register notice had gone
22 out that they were available, and I came in asking for
23 a copy of the report. I was told that I could not have
24 one, but I could look at it. And it was kind of, you
25 know, here, you can look at this and waved in my face,

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1 and then, you know, I, of course, I'm running around, I
2 have a zillion things to do, and I didn't have time to
3 sit and actually read through it.

4 I got to -- I went back to Pahrump, the next
5 day, and in Pahrump, they had 25 copies. And that was
6 a serious failing on, and I don't know if it was a
7 personal thing, or if it was a, you know, just that

8 maybe they hadn't gotten here yet. But the fact of the
9 matter is, they were not available when they were
10 supposed to be available.

11 There's been misrepresentation of information
12 in the Federal Register. The Federal Register notice
13 about the hearing that took place on September 5th
14 indicated it would be at a different location than it
15 actually was held at. The Federal Register notice said
16 something like 2332 Energy Way, and I recognized it was
17 a typo. However, there's no correction put out
18 indicating that it was going to be at 232 Energy Way,
19 and the Zip Code was just completely off and was
20 actually somewhere in the airport that was given at
21 that time.

22 There's been an address change for the
23 Department of Energy where the comments go in, new P.O.
24 Box, and that hasn't been told to many people. Just,
25 you kind of look at the papers and you see, oh, this

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1 one's different than this one. I wonder which one will
2 work. Do I photocopy it and send it to both? What do
3 you do? It's very hard sometimes to get this
4 information.

5 There is, you know, I do recognize there has
6 been a good, you know, having that 800 number set up,
7 the 800-967-3477 is a good thing and it's helpful to
8 get information through there, and appreciate that, and
9 I appreciate the help I do get from folks on the other
10 end of the line a lot of the time. But nevertheless,
11 that, you know, I know that number, not many other
12 people know that number. Why isn't there a nationwide,
13 a true nationwide outreach campaign to let people know
14 about this project, about the idea of this project? It
15 should be on television. CNN should be talking about
16 it. That 800 number should be flashing on "CNN
17 Headline News" so that people know and have an
18 opportunity to get information, don't have to go
19 digging and pawing through documents and go into back
20 rooms and buildings and, you know, the middle of night
21 to go look for stuff. So that's a big thing.

22 Also, this, this comment period here, while,
23 it supposedly started May 4th, it didn't, you know, the
24 preliminary -- because the Preliminary Site Suitability
25 Evaluation Report wasn't released until the end of

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1 August, it was not -- it wasn't especially clear to a

2 lot of people about what the, when the comment period,
3 what the comment period exactly was on. And it should
4 have been held. There should have been hearings held
5 throughout the country because again, this is a
6 national issue. It's a national problem. The problem
7 of nuclear waste, and it's a national issue. And if
8 nothing else, at least the neighboring states who would
9 be so tremendously affected, Utah and California,
10 should have had opportunities. And while I do know
11 there was a hearing in Inyo County, it was very poorly
12 advertised. It wasn't a formal hearing, it was a field
13 hearing. And I'm not clear, and the many other folks I
14 have talked to are not clear on what the difference is
15 and why there was a difference and why there weren't
16 formal hearings.

17 The hearing that took place in Las Vegas, I'd
18 like to speak a moment on that. It was September 5th,
19 and as I saw over 500 people showed up to the
20 Department of Energy building on Energy Way. Why, it
21 was a poor location, first off. It was a nonneutral
22 location. It should have been held at the Grant Sawyer
23 State Building, or at another state or county building,
24 or a community center, or a public library. These are

25 all places that are neutral, not surrounded by

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1 barbed-wire fence where you have to pass an armed guard

2 to get into the facility. That was a very

3 intimidating -- I was, I was told I couldn't go in

4 until I was there to set up to do an event, and I was

5 told I couldn't go in until 4:00 when I was there at

6 2:00 and, you know, then folks who did get there at

7 4:00 went in to sign up to speak, were told they

8 wouldn't speak until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning. That

9 left, that made a lot -- that discouraged a lot of

10 people, and a lot of people left unable to speak, even

11 though there was a little closet that you could duck

12 into, that's not the point of a hearing.

13 A hearing is meant not only for you to give

14 your testimony, but also to hear the testimony of those

15 in your community. That's a very important thing to

16 have, is to hear what your neighbors, what other folks

17 in your community are talking about, what their

18 concerns are. So we were really disappointed. Also

19 disappointed in the way the hearing was set up, that

20 there were three hearings supposed to take place in

21 three hours, between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. A hearing

22 in Carson City, in Elko, and in Las Vegas were supposed
23 to take place, as I understand it, and they, they're
24 connected by the satellite feed, so we were all
25 watching what was going on in these other places, which

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1 is great. And I think that all of the hearings should
2 have been broadcast on live satellite feed, not just,
3 and you know, throughout Nevada, but the difference
4 being, instead of spending, you know, spending 30
5 minutes on one site, 30 minutes on the next site, 30
6 minutes on the next site, that was not appropriate for
7 people who had, you know, left work early to come down
8 and speak or who had to work early the next morning and
9 could not wait until 2:00 in the morning, you know, the
10 hearing ended at 2:15, about 2:15 the following
11 morning, which at midnight the Department of Energy
12 should have recognized that there was still over 200
13 people in that building, wanting to speak, and waiting
14 to testify, and being there and should have at that
15 point said, "Tonight we're done for tonight, it's too
16 late, people should go home, get a good night's rest,
17 they have to work," and respected the community a
18 little bit more, and said, "We're going to reschedule,

19 we're going to do another hearing day."

20 It's absolutely preposterous to think that
21 places like Battle Mountain or Elko had two field
22 hearings scheduled, whereas Las Vegas, the major
23 population center of Nevada, had one, and it was
24 three-hour hearing. Even Pahrump had a six-hour
25 hearing scheduled. And that was a serious failing, I

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1 I think, on the Department of Energy, and I think it
2 was -- and no offense to you folks sitting in the room
3 -- but I think it was completely intentional to
4 discourage people, to discourage public participation.
5 And it did discourage people from participating. I've
6 heard from hundreds of people who said, who are
7 unfortunately falling victim to a certain psychological
8 torture that's been happening where they think it's
9 inevitable, and we know it's not inevitable, and we
10 know this project is not going to continue, because,
11 you know, whatever it takes, it will be stopped.

12 It's a bad site politically, you know. We're
13 working on it politically, socially, and through
14 education of people all throughout the country, and
15 it's just, it's good to know that there are thousands

16 and thousands of people in the United States right now
17 who oppose the Yucca Mountain Project. And most
18 people, when they did hear about the project, oppose
19 the project. They hear what it is, what it would
20 entail, we hear about the shipments, and they say no.

21 In light out of what happened September 11th
22 and the tragedies in New York, and in Washington, D.C.,
23 people now more than ever are worried about these
24 nuclear shipments, not, not just the regular John and
25 Jane Doe of America, but even the Secretary himself

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1 was, knew that these shipments are a target, that these
2 shipments are dangerous and halt the shipments twice,
3 has halted shipments twice since then. And that, you
4 know, that's a recognition that's again pointing out
5 this is not a good project, this is not a good idea to
6 ship waste from all over the country to put in it one
7 spot because those shipments are so deadly and
8 dangerous, and it will not clean up any of the other
9 sites around the country.

10 There are, however, solutions that we can,
11 and steps that we can take towards finding a fair,
12 feasible, you know, politically and scientifically

13 sound solution. And these steps include, number one,
14 phasing out nuclear power. Why are we mopping the
15 bathroom floor before we shut the overflowing bathtub
16 water off? That's what I'd like to know. Number two,
17 looking at, you know, there's room on site, the
18 utilities have come out and said there's room on site
19 to store the waste for 100 years. It can be stored on
20 site for at least this time or as close to the
21 generating site as possible and recognize that in
22 places like Prairie Island, you can't store it on site.
23 That Northern States Power, now Excel Energy, should
24 never have built that reactor at Prairie Island in the
25 first place. That is disgusting, and it's just, just

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1 deplorable. I can't believe that was actually built
2 there.
3 And again, another instance of environmental
4 racism where, you know, poor indigenous community was
5 targeted for the most deadly substance on the planet.
6 Another step that we can take towards finding a healthy
7 realistic solution, besides leaving it stored on site,
8 and, you know, and phasing out nuclear power, is to
9 actually create a national dialogue on high-level

10 waste. That has not been, that has not happened.

11 There's not been a national forum created that I'm
12 aware of, and again I'm fairly new to this, only been
13 kind of following this for about five years, and there
14 has not been a national forum on high-level nuclear
15 waste that has discussed what alternatives are, that
16 have looked at the fact that Yucca Mountain is not
17 safe, that have looked at the earthquakes that Yucca
18 Mountain, there's been all this characterization
19 happening, all this study happening for the last 20
20 years, and all that study has shown us that this
21 project, while we've invested, you know, billions of
22 dollars into it, is not going to protect the, protect
23 the people of the United States, the people of Nevada,
24 or the people of the world from this nuclear problem.
25 We know that there's so much nuclear waste

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1 stored in the United States right now at the different
2 reactor sites, and that that's not all the waste that
3 would eventually wind up in Yucca Mountain, because of
4 the Atoms for Peace Program, and we're aware of that
5 and that program involves shipping research reactor

6 fuel and fuel back to the United States from all over
7 the country -- excuse me -- all over the world, and
8 that again is a dangerous proposition to think about,
9 you know, barges or boats or planes, God forbid planes,
10 but barges or boats coming from Taiwan and North Korea
11 to the United States, loaded with irradiated fuel, is
12 just, is not a healthy thing for the ocean or for
13 people living in those port cities, people living in
14 our port cities in the general, again the general
15 public.

16 Okay, let me just sum up real quick. There
17 are some real flaws in the way the process has been
18 during this siting recommendation comment period, site
19 recommendation comment period, and those include
20 misinformation put in the Federal Register. It has
21 included the inability to get the word out about the
22 hearings. When you announce a hearing on Friday that's
23 going to happen on Monday, in a rural town that has a
24 weekly newspaper, it ain't going to get out into that
25 paper and it's not going to get heard and it's not

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1 going to be attended. And this is really inappropriate
2 thing to do to the people of Nevada who are very

3 concerned about this issue and have been for years,

4 since the, since it, since the project began.

5 Nevadans know what the potential of the

6 Department of Energy is. Nevadans got the shit bombed

7 out of them by the Department of Energy. Remember

8 that? And a lot of us suffer from it. We remember

9 that. A lot of us have watched our friends and family

10 die because of it, and we're not willing to let that

11 happen again.

12 And this, this joke of a process has been a

13 real slap in the face to Nevadans that were hoping to

14 get a little more respect from the Department of Energy

15 because of the nuclear sacrifice that they've made

16 already. And it's really a huge disappointment, and

17 you know, I will say that over and over again. It's a

18 huge disappointment.

19 There are ways to better involve the public.

20 In this day and age, you have to use -- you have to

21 update the website, which was not updated for about 10

22 days after the hearings. The initial hearings in

23 Pahrump and Amargosa Valley were canceled. Still had

24 those listed. You know, so the internet is a huge way

25 to reach people. Television is the prime way to reach

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1 out to people in this country. And that television
2 has, as I've seen it, has never been utilized by the
3 Department of Energy to invite people to hearings.
4 I've been, you know, I remember trying to
5 talk -- I was invited to speak on a talk show and also
6 invited to Allen Benson or anybody from the project to
7 speak as well, and they refused. And that does not, it
8 just, it looks bad. Looks bad when, you know, when
9 even, not even the public relations, public affairs
10 will speak with somebody else on this, on a TV about
11 it. And TV is the biggest, like I said, it's the
12 biggest way to get folks out. I've seen Yucca Mountain
13 information on television a number of times, but only
14 at the urging of grassroots activists. And I've never
15 seen it as a result of Department of Energy work.
16 Really.

17 So, the public process, you know, they really
18 need to involve not just Nevada, but the 50 million
19 people who live along the transportation routes need to
20 have a say in this decision and, you know, I have been
21 working my ass off trying to inform those people and
22 would like to see the Department of Energy take better

23 steps to inform people along the routes.

24 Also like to see the Department of Energy do

25 an Environmental Impact Statement on transportation

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1 itself because that is going to have a huge

2 environmental impact. It's a huge environmental and

3 socio-economic impact. We saw it in New Mexico. We

4 saw what happened with WIPP. We saw how people who

5 live along those routes, their property values dropped.

6 And we saw that, it happened. It's not just some

7 anti-nuclear imaginary friend. It happened. It's a

8 reality.

9 Just the perception of a nuclear waste dump

10 in your neighborhood, in your area, in your city, near

11 your city, scares away business. It causes a decrease

12 in the socio-economic -- it causes you to drop down in

13 the socio-economic scale, and that's not something that

14 most folks in the United States are aware of. No

15 homeowner's insurance or no insurance of any type will

16 cover a nuclear accident, which is another thing that

17 most folks aren't aware of, and this is the Department

18 of Energy that's responsible for getting this

19 information out to the people, Department of Energy can

20 have a guy driving around in an electric car, you know,
21 which they do, all, I bumped into this guy three times
22 one summer. And driving around in an electric car,
23 demonstrating to people that this is, you know, that
24 this technology exists, that it's a possibility.

25 And it's a real shame that that same effort

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1 couldn't happen with this, these nuclear issues,
2 especially these nuclear wastes. It's a scary thing.
3 People are scared of it. People will continue to be
4 scared of it, as they rightly should, because it is not
5 safe. It's not safe stored on site. It's not safe
6 stored in Yucca Mountain. It's not safe. The creation
7 of it needs to stop.

8 And I think that's about where I'm at for
9 now. And I've submitted comments a whole bunch of
10 other times, and I'm sure as you're reviewing this
11 comment document, you can look for Susi Snyder again
12 and see me pop up a number of times over and over and
13 over again.

14 And I still would love to have a time on the
15 record where my questions could be answered. And I
16 have met with the Secretary of, or Chairman Meserve

17 from the Nuclear Regulatory Commissions and he's seen
18 problems in Yucca Mountain. He actually said to me
19 that not having a final regulation, a final site
20 guideline before recommending the site, he said it's
21 like putting the cart before the horse. And you know,
22 this is, this is the head of the Nuclear Regulatory
23 Commission. This is the guy who has the final -- who
24 has quite a bit of say-so in whether or not Yucca
25 Mountain gets a license, and he recognizes that the

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1 process that Nevada is going through right now,
2 Department of Energy's going through here right now, is
3 inappropriate, and that there should be, that the
4 regulations that are on the books right now should be
5 the final regulations. They should not be changed.

6 I submitted comments on the proposal to
7 change them. I've never heard anything back. I
8 haven't been able to find anything on the website about
9 it. And I'm really disappointed in that because I
10 worked very hard to figure out what the hell to say.
11 And, and you know, did that, and still haven't heard.

12 I, you know, it's not -- it's just not,
13 there's not a lot of respect for Nevadans in this

14 entire process, and that's going to come back and
15 unfortunately it's going to come back and bite the
16 Department of Energy in the ass. And, you know,
17 there's a lot have nice folks who work for DOE, I'm
18 sorry that they do, but I hate to see that happen, you
19 know.

20 There's so much to do, and cleaning up the
21 sites that are so heavily contaminated around the
22 country, and just characterizing how badly they're
23 contaminated. You know, let's stop the Hanford tanks
24 from leaking into the Columbia River before we think
25 about, you know, taking stuff out of dry casks and

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1 moving it across the country. Let's get a little, you
2 know, let's get a little priority, prioritization
3 happening.

4 And it's very late. It's actually 11:45 p.m.
5 on Friday, October 19th. And again, I'm standing in
6 the Freedom of Information Act Public Reading Room at
7 the Science Center, and that's about it. I'm done.