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25 SEP 30 1999 MR. PAWLAK: I'm John Pawlak. I'm from Pahrump.

1 I was lucky enough to live near the first nuclear
2 waste dump that we had in the United States over at Redgate
3 Woods in Cook County, Illinois. Now I'm lucky enough to live
4 in Pahrump where we might have Yucca Mountain over there.

2 5 DOE, with the Atomic Energy Commission, the
6 Manhattan Project, when they got rid of the waste over there,
7 they just dumped it over there.

8 They thought they were doing the proper methods
9 over burial over at that area, just like we think we're
10 properly taking care of the nuclear waste now, but looking back
11 in retrospect -- this is out of an article that I wrote some
12 years ago. "It's been fifty short years since the Manhattan
13 Project was transferred to the Suburban Forest Reserve District
14 and Thirty years since its reactors, the related waste were
15 buried.

16 "Scientist haven't much knowledge about what lies
17 below the earth. Records of buried waste are grossly
18 incomplete and standards about what is considered dangerous
19 have changed dramatically since then.

20 "Ironically scientists know so little about how
21 our nuclear pioneers lived and worked here that they might as
22 well have been digging into Inca ruins, not debris from a
23 nuclear age library."

24 That was fifty years ago. That was just the
25 Manhattan Project. Now we think that we're doing the best
1 thing possible for today's day and age.

2 Fifty years from now, someone will be reading an

3 article like this looking back in retrospect and saying, "God,
4 those people were really stupid what they did to Yucca
5 Mountain."

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6 There's another article that I took from -- it's
7 called Social Issues Resource Series about confronting
8 eternity, the long-lived problem of nuclear waste.

9 This struck with me through the years. This is
10 just a short statement.

11 It says: "Nuclear waste has been called the
12 ultimate pollution. Extremely toxic, often long-lived and
13 produced in mass quantities. It ticks out its radioactive
14 half-life in units of time more appropriate to geological
15 changes than the human lifespan.

16 To put it in perspective, all of what we call
17 civilization, which has taken place within the last 10,000
18 years, in a tiny fraction of time, barely fifty years ago,
19 modern humans unleashed a powerful process touted as benign and
20 universally beneficial, nuclear fission, now that waste from
21 the process could outlast our species.

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22 What we haven't done is look at other aspects. We
23 put all our eggs in one basket, so to speak, which is Yucca
24 Mountain.

25 If we would take money which was earmarked for
1 Yucca Mountain had gone into other aspects, take the research
2 and development money going into something like transmutation
3 or something else.

4 There are other ways to deal with the nuclear
5 waste so we won't have this problem for generations to come,

6 10,000, half a million years.

7 We don't have to take this route, but this is the
8 easiest thing to do, and, you know, that's all I have to say on
9 that subject.