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JANE WALSH

MS. WALSH: Thank you all you long distancers. I appreciate that you're still here and awake, and I'd like to thank -- thank you all for this opportunity. If I can remove my horror from the Yucca Mountain Project equation, I would say that this is an absolutely fascinating process. To think that the DOE has managed to proceed with this project to the point of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I say with utmost respect "wow," and I thought Lance Burton was the master magician.

This afternoon I listened to physicians who had traveled from California to take a stand of opposition to the Yucca Mountain Project and voice their concerns regarding potential health threats. I concentrated on the scientific language as the Shundahai organization presented scientific information that addressed the corrosability of the microorganisms and minerals which reside in Yucca Mountain and the subsequent damage they can inflict on casks holding high-level radioactive waste.

I listened to Kenny Guinn's letter of opposition, our own Attorney General's pointing out the legal implications and the flaws of this DEIS. And I found myself humbled by the eloquent words of the Shoshone tribal elder reminding all of us that we will bear full responsibility of this legacy should this proceed. These are my observations and comments. They're not scientific. They're just mine.

1 I look closely at all of you who represent the DOE and I'm thinking I know you went to college and I bet you got even more than one degree and I know I'm not presumptuous in believing you're a smart group of people. Holding a position on this board is obvious proof that you're specialists if not experts in your field. So why am I, a 39-year-old registered nurse who has only a simple understanding about your project telling you this is a bad idea?

No, please don't answer it. I only have five minutes to speak out against a project that will affect the world as we know it for the next 10,000 years. The answer is because you're a civil servant. You're here to serve me, and it's my responsibility to remind you that your job is to find ways to protect the public from radioactive waste, not put 'em in harm's way. I am sure you have people who love you, you have some form of family and you have at least one friend. Like Ann Frank -- look at them checking.

Like Ann Frank, I believe you're basically good. People are basically good, but somewhere along the way, your department has gotten swept up and blinded with the possibility of making Yucca Mountain a real reality and you've forgotten that there's fifty million people who may and probably will be negatively impacted by your creation. _____

2 People, let's be honest. If your department had the creative wherewithal, I know that those same masses of gray matter, fired neurons which postulated the same problems, the same scientific flaws and the same concerns so clearly identified by this community and others around the country, your choice not to anticipate the public's questions and your choice not to provide a thorough DEIS has, I believed, severely damaged your future relationship with all of us. _____

And to close, I wish to share you a story which happened during the second date with my now husband. We were dining starry-eyed at the Mt. Charleston Lodge and we were gleefully watching a toddler systemically manage to fill his right ear one by one with miniature marshmallows, one after the other. The mother noticed all of this only when the miniature marshmallows took the shape of a cauliflower protruding from his right ear. The child was delighted with his accomplishment and the mother plucked the miniature marshmallows from ear baffled and scolded, "What were you thinking?"

I realize we're not talking about miniature marshmallows and I realize that the DOE are not a group of toddlers, and yet I still find myself thinking just like that baffled mom, and I echo her words, what were you thinking? Thank you.