

OCT 03 2001

SILVIA COLTON: My name is Sylvia Colton,
5 C-O-L-T-O-N, and I live in Bishop, California, and I've
6 lived there for 20 years, and I'm speaking as a private
7 citizen, although I belong to several environmental groups.
8 My first comment is that this particular
9 hearing wasn't going to happen here, and I think that it
10 should have. We had very short notice. I wanted to go to
11 Armagosa or to Pahrump but it was too far, and then last
12 week's paper that this was here, and it made an opportunity
13 to come. I couldn't have afforded to go, at a \$1.81 a
14 gallon, to go to Armagosa, and I do know where it is. I
15 used to work in Death Valley.

16 So I think that was incorrect in not
17 offering these hearings throughout California, actually
18 because this impacts all of us. The transport of this
19 material will pass through our communities, and in the
20 Eastern Sierra our communities are all along the highway,
21 and the possibility of failure of transport, which has
22 already happened. In either New Mexico or Colorado a
23 container fell off a truck, and had potential for a lot of
24 damage. So I am very concerned about the transport of the
25 material.

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1 We have not been made aware of what routes
2 are going to be used. I would like to know that
3 information. I'm assuming Highway 95, but I would also
4 assume that they are going to pass through Inyo county in
5 some way, and since they can't go -- I do not believe you
6 can go through a national park, you're going to have to go
7 around Death Valley. I see it coming through our area very
8 closely, and it concerns me greatly. So the transport is a
9 very significant issue.

10 Also, I would like to know if the drivers
11 are going to be federal employees, because I believe this
12 is also a terrorist risk, for not only internal terrorism
13 but external terrorists, and I would like to know if these
14 are federal drivers. The current pay scale for drivers
15 that transport hazardous material is \$15.75 an hour, which
16 is absolutely, to me, ridiculous. My neighbor's gardener
17 gets \$20 an hour, and we're going to transport stuff that
18 has potential for endless, endless, endless disaster. So
19 the transport is a very big concern of mine.

20 The last concern is the seismic concerns I
21 have. I know that when I worked in Death Valley, I was --
22 I'm a nurse practitioner, and I was trying to evaluate the
23 quality of the water concerning children there, and I was

24 only concerned about fluoride. And when I talked to the
25 water man from Inyo County, I said, By the way, has any
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1 radioactive material come from mercury yet? And he looked
2 at me rather surprised and said, Yes, as a matter of fact,
3 it's been at the meadows, Ash Meadows. We've already
4 detected it there.

5 Shortly thereafter, I was on an open mic
6 with one of the senators from Nevada, and I asked him was
7 he aware of this and what's being done about it, what can
8 be done about it? And he said, Yes, we are aware of it and
9 so are both of your California senators, and nothing has
10 been done about it. Therefore, I have a real strong lack
11 of confidence in DOE, because when they put the tests
12 underground it was supposed to be safe, and obviously it
13 isn't. The radiation is coming to California. It's
14 downhill, and that's where it will go. The water table
15 runs from Utah right through Nevada to California, and I've
16 seen the profiles on that. And I think they are your
17 profiles, as a matter of fact.

18 Anyway, I'm very concerned about the seismic
19 nature of the area. There's been a major earthquake go
20 right through the area where it's going to be stored. I've
21 seen photographs of the fault, and I think this is
22 astonishing that that's the place that we would put
23 something we're going to store underground.

24 So that's the conclusion of my comments.