made your remarks, sir?

MR. GEORGE WOOD: No.

MR. THOMAS WICHLINAN: Thank you.

THE FACILITATOR: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Wood.

I would like to remind you that you could file written comments -- submit written comments through a variety of ways. And all comments are reviewed and considered and analysed by the Department of Energy and the State of Idaho in preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

So, is anyone else in the room who has not had an opportunity that would like to comment formally this evening?

We’ll let the record reflect that no one has so indicated.

We will stand at ease, subject to call of the hearing officer in the event that others come who would like to comment. So, right now, we’ll be off the record.

(A recess was taken.)

THE FACILITATOR: We’ll be back on the record.

This is a continuation of the public
If the court reporter is having trouble following you or keeping up, she may interrupt to ask you to either slow down or speak directly into the microphone.

I will begin now the formal comment portion of tonight’s hearing. I want to stress this is a formal hearing and a recorded proceeding with a full transcript being prepared.

And finally, I would like to thank you all for attending and for your cooperation in observing the rules I set forth.

The first speaker this evening is Ken Niles. Please step up to the microphone at the podium.


I do have some written comments, and I will provide those upon completion of my oral comments. And I’ll read these. I would just like to sum them up.

First off though, I would like to deviate a bit from my prepared comments in my script to make a comment about the meeting format that we’re having here tonight.

I would like to take issue with the rigidity of this format and say that I don’t believe it’s fully serving the public’s interests. The woman who spoke in the question and answer had a comment to make, had to leave, was not able to stay for this, and the fact that the comments that she made were not on the record, were not allowed to be on the record, I think that was a disservice to her, and I believe in keeping this type of rigid format, we don’t fully serve the public, which is what we should be doing."

In terms of my comments, they will focus solely on the one aspect of the EIS. The draft EIS focuses on the proposals to bring high-level waste from Idaho to Hanford for vitrification.

We are certainly, from the State of Oregon’s perspective, directly impacted by activities that occur at Hanford. This is an issue that certainly draws our interest. It is Oregon’s position that it is...
premature to consider bringing Idaho waste to 
Hanford at this point for two reasons. First 
that Hanford does not yet have vitrification 
facilities, and second that once we do gain 
those facilities, there is a pressing need to 
treat Hanford’s waste as soon as possible. 

The discussions that we’re having now 
in terms of considering the ultimate state of 
Idaho’s waste and whether it should come to 
Hanford are ones we have should have perhaps 45 
years from now. It is, again, too premature.[3] 

We recognize the financial constraints 
that drives this issue, and it is certainly the 
reason that Hanford is being looked at for 
Idaho’s waste. And given that we believe that 
it may make sense down the road, in the future, 
to discuss bringing waste from Idaho to Hanford 
for treatment. However, even then in the 

distant future, the State of Oregon would not 
consider treatment of Idaho high-level waste at 
Hanford unless the following conditions were 
met: First, Idaho waste would not be treated at 
Hanford until all of Hanford’s high-level waste 
is treated; second, Idaho waste would not come 
to Hanford until it is time for treatment;

third, upon vitrification of Idaho’s waste, it 
must then be returned to Idaho or to a national 
repository, if one is available. The treated 
waste must not remain at Hanford; four, the 
transportation of this waste both to and from 
Idaho must adhere to enhanced transportation 
safety protocols. And we would offer up those 
as by developed by Western States for 
transportation of transuranic waste as a model; 
and fifth, Oregon must be allowed to participate 
fully in Hanford decision making meetings in 
order to assure these conditions are met.

There isn’t time to go into great 
detail on each of these conditions that we 
offer. Let me just highlight a couple of 
issues. One is that Idaho waste not come to 
Hanford early. The draft EIS suggests, at least 
as we found, two possible time frames to bring 
Idaho waste to Hanford. One beginning in 2028 
or sometime thereafter, which presumably would 
be after Hanford’s waste has been vitrified. 
The other talks about a window between 2012 and 
2025 and building new storage facilities at 
Hanford.

As we have heard, the calcine waste at
Idaho is in bin sets which have a design life of 500 years. There is no rush to get that out of there. We believe it would be financially irresponsible to squander many millions of dollars on temporary storage facilities at Hanford when the waste is safely stored in Idaho.

With that, I think I’ll conclude my comments, and again submit a written -- these are preliminary comments. We will follow-up with additional written comments that deal with more with some of the technical aspects of the EIS.

PETER RICHARDSON: Thank you for your comments Mr. Niles.

I would like to take this opportunity to note that I’ll mark as Exhibit Number 1 to this proceeding a multi-paged document previously submitted to me by Mr. Wichmann entitled "Tom’s Talking Points – Portland Idaho High-Level Waste and Facilities Disposition Draft and Environmental Impact Statement."

That will be marked as Exhibit number 1. Exhibit number 2 of this evening’s proceeding is a three-page document entitled "Preliminary Comments of the State of Oregon on the Idaho High-Level Waste and Facilities Disposition Draft Environmental Impact Statement" dated February 22, 2000. That, we’ll mark as Exhibit number 2.

Our next scheduled commenter is Page Knight.

PAGE KNIGHT: I don’t have an exhibit.

Yeah. I represent Hanford Watch here in Portland -- the Portland area. And we -- this is sort of a new issue for us. It certainly hasn’t been on the top of our radar screen because of the tremendous problems that we’re dealing with at Hanford right now and the fact that we can’t even, you know, get the U.S. Department of Energy to agree to sign milestones for a possible vitrification plant. And Lynn Semmes who was here earlier mentioned that we are very worried right now that BNFL may crash in the United States with all the problems they are having in England, and we may not have a vitrification plant, and once again, be back to ground zero.

So, I’m going to make some just
general comments that some of my group and I
talked about over the weekend, and these aren’t
definitive. We just don’t know enough. I think
that they may help your decision making process
a little, hopefully.

First and foremost, we think this is a
very premature EIS. Like Lynn said, we are
putting the cart before the horse. I also want
to say -- and I feel like I can speak for a
great deal of the Northwest region, a great
number of people here. I know that Woody has
heard this on the Hanford Advisory Board that I
sit on and, you know, we certainly hear it in
our own circles. But none of us have any belief
that there will be a final repository in our
lifetimes.

Yucca Mountain is ten years behind
schedule. It’s millions of -- probably billions
by now dollars overrun in cost. It’s based on
poor science is what we see more and more of the
reports saying. So, we don’t have any belief in
the final repository.

And for any EIS to be driven by that
makes the whole thing even more premature in my
mind. One of the things that struck me when one

of you were speaking about the -- it was Tom --
was speaking about the values or the themes that
you heard from the people in your scoping
hearings. They remind me very much of some of
the values at the Hanford Advisory Board, which
is the Regional Citizens Advisory Board have and
one of them was protect the aquifers. Our prime
value is to protect the Columbia River.

If Hanford’s wastes are not vitrified,
some documents indicate that within the next 100
years, the Columbia River will be dead. That
means no economy, no healthy environment, no
fishing, nothing. I mean, that’s dead.

So, that is of utmost value to us, and
it sounds like it is the same kind of value to
the people in your region. We have also the
value of get on with it. And therefore, I can
say I understand the planning of this EIS that
you need to look at things ahead of time. And
somehow this EIS, in terms of looking at all of
the options far ahead of time makes sense on
that particular level.

It also says, you know, one of the
values was minimize the times of handling
waste. What that translates into for a lot of
us in this region is that you minimize the
transportation or the moving of any waste unless
there is a dire danger. We have so many dire
dangers.

The two biggest dangers in the country
are the 177 leaking tanks that, some of which
are leaking up at Hanford. That is a dire
danger.

We also have a decay basins which hold
2,300 fuel rods, most of which are corroding
that sit 400 yards from the Columbia, and those
pools that they sit in have leaked also. Those
are dire dangers, and those need handling
first.

So, this almost seems like, you know,
talking about marbles or something insane when we
have a lot of other things to worry about. So,
with those things said, I would like to say that
we have to handle -- one of our comments is we
have to handle the most dangerous things first,
and we -- this doesn't seem to be touching
that.

The last thing I would like to
say, -- and I hope you will let me go over by a
minute since we have such a small crowd here --

is that one of the things that intrigues me
about this whole thing -- and this is not that I
am bought off on it, by any means because I
don't have that right with my organization at
this particular time, but I am really intrigued
with the idea of a Northwest solution. I think
that we can't afford to have states pitted
against one another for cleanup dollars.

I think that we do have to work
together, and we have got to get creative
because Congress has not had the bill up to now
to fund cleanup at any site the way it should be
funded, and Hanford is the most contaminated
site in the western hemisphere, and I think we
all have to remember that.

And one of the things that I do
appreciate from the Idaho people here is that
you all seem to appreciate deeply and know that
this is the most contaminated site. You have
got nothing to compare to ours, and yet you
still have dangers that are imminent to your
livelihood, and health, and well-being.

So I'm intrigued with this, but I have
to go back to saying that this is awfully
premature. I would say that whatever actions
you do decide to take, move slowly. Do things a
step at a time. Don’t try to make all the
decisions now because they are not going to hold

up.

The fact is, all of us — I would say
most of us here by the time the tanks — the
tank waste at Hanford is vitrified are going to
be dead. I’m going to be 100 in 47 years, and
that’s when this -- our date is for finishing
the tank waste. Now, that’s sort of
interesting.

The same — in two years, the
political situation will change. So, we are
going to have a whole new politics. So what you
promise today isn’t necessarily going to be
given to us tomorrow. What we are looking at is
a government who has made promises and promises
to Hanford to clean it up, and we don’t get it.
And I would imagine you could say the same thing
for yourselves.

So, I would just end with those
cautionsary remarks and wish you luck on this,
and I also think it’s really, really important
for all of us to work together. And I really
appreciate you coming here, and I’m sorry that

--- New Information ---

we don’t have a bigger turnout.
PETER RICHARDSON: Thank you for your
comments.

Bill Biere?

I remind you, you have until April 19
to submit your written comments, and that’s a
postmark date.

PAGE KNIGHT: These go on the record
though, don’t they?

PETER RICHARDSON: Absolutely. This
is all on the record.

Good evening, Mr. Biere

BILLY BIERE: Good evening. My name is

Bill Biere.

I look around, and I’m probably the
oldest person in this room. And I’m going to be
dead a long time before any of these goals are
met. And the decisions that you are going to
make are going to involve future generations
years to come -- years and years to come, and it
behooves us, I believe, to make those kind of
decisions especially when we don’t know where we
are going or what we are going to do.

I had the experience of having been
under an atomic bomb via -- by virtue of my

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Army service in 1951 at the atomic test site.
And at that time, I knew we can destroy
ourselves, and I think that we're well on our
way.
I'm afraid that unless we take this
process out of the hands of people that are in
it for profit and put it in the hands of people
who are given the task of applying themselves as
best they can to this cleanup process.
When the bomb was built, I was around,
and the United States gathered the best
scientists from all over the world and put them
to work on this job, and they produced the
bomb. And then they went on and on -- the
scientists went on and on and on creating huge
amounts of lethal waste without any pre --
what's the word I'm searching for -- without any
idea of how they are going to get rid of it, how
it's going to be disposed of, if it can be
disposed of safely. They go on with this
half-baked idea down at Yucca Mountain.
I am sickened by the comments that are
made: "We don't have enough money." We have
enough money, and if we don't have enough money,
we're all liable to die. That's just what it
boils down to.
The priorities of the government must be changed. The public should be made or must be made aware of the threat that is posed by installations like Hanford and INEL.
I remember when it was INEL, and they threw in an environment. What's going on? Are they playing games with us? Who are they talking to, environment? INEL and environment.
Look what Lockheed did for them up there trying to clean up that space, and how they over -- the cost overrun was so great.
It's beyond me why the Federal Government is not putting all of its available resources in the hands of people who can and will do the job and taking it out of the hands of people who are in it for profit only.
As was mentioned earlier, BNFL is a British government-owned company. They are trying to raise money in the United States.
Then they want the Department of Energy to assure them that if they raise money -- and lose money that the taxpayers of the United States is going to repay them. These shenanigans that go on are just, you know, just -- okay -- are
really -- I find abhorrent because the public is being treated as if they don’t have a stake in this and as if they don’t have any interest in it.

The public does have a stake in it, and they do have an interest in it if they were informed — properly informed — and I have said earlier that if the DOE really wants to get some money out of the Federal Government, they can take a full page ad out in the Oregonian or the New York Times or the Los Angeles Times or the Wall Street Journal and tell the people how many curies of radiation is sitting up there in that mess at Hanford and ready to go into the river, and how much of that waste is at INEEL is—

poses a threat to the public.

It’s high time that the public be made aware. And the fact that nuclear industry has been on the public dole for so many years and that the power of the nuclear industry and the relationship between the military nuclear program and the civilian nuclear program must be recognized and dealt with effectively because there are economic forces involved that are going on in the world right now that may affect
ED MARTISZUS: Hi. My name is Ed Martiszus. I'm a Registered Nurse, environmentalist in the State of Oregon here going on 23 years. And my address is 53215 Timber Road, Vernonia, Oregon 97064. My phone number is 1 (503) 429-3136.

PETER RICHARDSON: Thank you. Proceed with your comments.

ED MARTISZUS: Yeah. I don't talk in terms of radiation getting into the environment. It's already here. In my practice as a nurse in this area twenty some years, I've seen the effects of it. So it's a matter of degrees to me. It's a matter of casualties mounting up as more and more isotopes get into the environment and get into the food chain, and things like that.

My understanding is that the groundwater or the water going into the Snake River at the INEEL is also radioactive. So, already, you're transporting nuclear waste by Hanford already. So, it's coming to the area here as fast as we want it right now.

And Page is right, on the triage level, you know, as a nurse, we have to deal with the most immediate health threat first, and that is the tanks and the springs and the tritium plumes and 2,300 fuel rods and decay basin, and things like that.

I would like to see more of a list of isotopes and toxic chemicals in these handouts other than plutonium and uranium so, I know, you know, as a nurse environmentalist, I can figure out the toxicology of it and biological effects that people that are exposed and also like the amount of curies that will be lost in shipment from INEEL to Hanford, and as far as getting into the environment, and the proposed, you know, or projected lists of different diseases from this process as this stuff moves its way from INEEL towards Hanford, and the cost of what it's going to cost the community to pay for this as far as the medical treatment and the families going to visits to the hospital and all those things.

So, that would be more wholistic for me to get a better view, as a nurse, to know what the real cost is to the community and the...
real threat is so we can inform the community so
they can make an informed consent under the U.N.
Declaration on Human Rights because to be
unnecessarily exposed would — under our
Constitution supremacy vote violate the
Declaration on Human Rights, that right to life
and having it arbitrarily taken away and also
the rights under due process of the
Constitution. They would — Fourth and Fifth
Amendment Rights, they would not arbitrarily be
deprived of their life and property — be
dispossessed of that without any kind of due
process of the law such as an arrest and
invitement to trial and a conviction, which is
usually the grounds in our society for taking
away things from people, you know, under our
Constitution, our rule of law.
So, that's basically all I have to
say.

PETER RICHARDSON: Thank you.
ED MARTYSZ: Thanks a lot.

PETER RICHARDSON: Thank you, sir.
I'll ask the question again. If
anyone in the audience who has not yet had an
opportunity to comment would like to do so,