

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 as I know, and I have been gone for a week, so
2 a lot has happened, and I haven't read the
3 papers, but my understanding is, is there is no
4 transuranic waste coming to the site.

5 But I believe there is transuranic
6 waste, Hanford transuranic waste leaving the
7 site for New Mexico.

8 MR. MIKE CLEMENT: Oh. I see.
9 That's the trucks that you are talking about
10 that are going to be on the highway tomorrow,
11 the ones leaving the site?

12 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: There
13 are trucks leaving, yeah.

14 MR. MIKE CLEMENT: All right.
15 Is it true, too, then, that your body considers
16 that because there's a court injunction on
17 receiving material over there, that because you
18 might, quote, fabricate some in the treatment
19 of the material there at Hanford, that you have
20 stopped doing any further work? Is this truly
21 in the public interest? I mean, can you sit
22 there and tell me that?

23 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I think
24 we are talking two different things. I think
25 one has to do with a lawsuit that the

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 Department of Ecology and Heart of America and
2 other people have filed, regarding the
3 transuranic waste coming to Hanford.

4 And the other was an administrative
5 order by the Department of Ecology that told
6 Hanford to do certain things. And I don't know
7 what the outcomes of those or what the
8 situation is in the past week, because I have
9 been on the road.

10 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel?

11 MR. NICHOLAS CETO: I can tell
12 that you DOE, someone from DOE, the other
13 person might want to answer, but they did send
14 direction to their contractors to stop certain
15 activities.

16 And then the state and EPA and
17 Energy met earlier this week, and Energy
18 received a letter following that from the
19 state, clarifying what that order meant, in the
20 interest of keeping the work moving forward,
21 and giving some time to work out the issues
22 that were stopping work.

23 MR. DEE WILLIS: More
24 information from the DOE back here.

25 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: I am

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 George Sanders from DOE.

2 Just confirming what Nick said, that
3 we did have some areas of work that had been
4 stopped, and we did, as Nick said, discuss some
5 things with the state, got some clarification,
6 we got a stay on one particular part of that
7 order, and letters went to the contractors to
8 resume work.

9 So that is past us at least for now.
10 It is a 30 day stay. So it's temporary. But
11 they are back to work.

12 MR. DEE WILLIS: Thanks,
13 George. Sir.

14 DR. TREY RIGERT: Hi. I am
15 Trey Rigert. I live in Hood River. A
16 follow-up on this lady's question, two parts.

17 Of the 70,000 proposed trucks, what
18 percentage would be transuranic waste, and then
19 just looking at the map, it seems like it makes
20 more sense to build a packaging facility down
21 in New Mexico and ship it directly there for
22 packaging and placement.

23 Are we just basically saving money
24 by bringing it here, and then down there?

25 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: The

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 second question, New Mexico doesn't have those
2 certification processes themselves yet. They
3 just have the disposal part of it. They are
4 planning on building that.

5 DR. TREY RIGERT: But if that's
6 where it's going, why not just send it there?
7 Why truck it all over the country?

8 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Because
9 it will be years before that's up on line.

10 DR. TREY RIGERT: It takes
11 years to build a certification plant?

12 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: To build
13 the plant and get the program in place to do
14 that. I mean, literally -- because one of the
15 problems is, it takes you two years just to get
16 money from Congress to start building the plant
17 after ask you for it.

18 The second part, if I can find my
19 slide here.

20 MS. AMBER WALDREF: I have a
21 slide that might help.

22 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Go
23 ahead, Amber.

24 MS. AMBER WALDREF: This is a
25 slide that shows the amount of waste. So that

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 the transuranic is that top one that we were
2 talking about. So it's smaller than the other
3 portions.

4 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I have
5 got a shipment number, too, or number of
6 shipments.

7 MS. AMBER WALDREF: Oh. You
8 have it by number of shipments.

9 MR. NICHOLAS CETO: Let me add
10 something while he is putting it up. That is
11 actually a good question which I hadn't heard
12 anyone ask before. Because part of the
13 proposal at Hanford to speed up waste
14 processing is to send advanced process lines,
15 which are portable processing units to Hanford
16 to process waste.

17 And I think it's a good question.
18 Maybe George could answer it. George, why
19 couldn't they go directly to WIPP and have it
20 processed there instead of bringing it through
21 Hanford?

22 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: Well,
23 you've got to understand that the disposal
24 activities at WIPP are governed by EPA and the
25 state of New Mexico. The Waste Isolation Pilot

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 Plant has a permit, and so anything we do down
2 there is subject to getting approved changes to
3 the permit from the state of New Mexico, and
4 depending upon how big a deal that is, that can
5 take years.

6 The remote handled waste acceptance
7 criteria down in New Mexico, we think that's
8 going to take several more years to get that
9 done. So that's basically, it's just going to
10 be a long, lengthy process.

11 And right now we are trying to get
12 those shipments accelerated, get a lot of stuff
13 off-site, and --

14 MS. AMBER WALDREF: George,
15 doesn't Hanford, as well, have a permit, and
16 it's going to take time?

17 I mean, we don't have these
18 capabilities right now if they are remote
19 handled TRU, it will be the similar type
20 process that has to happen at Hanford.

21 I mean, no one from the state is
22 here unfortunately to help with that question.

23 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: No. We
24 don't have the certification processes yet, in
25 part because we don't know what the criteria

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 are, because that permit is still going through
2 for RH.

3 For contact handled, the other
4 transuranic stuff, we do have that
5 certification capability right now, and that's
6 what enables us to send transuranic waste down
7 there right now. This is an existing facility
8 called the Waste Receiving and Processing
9 Facility.

10 MR. DEE WILLIS: Sir, did your
11 question get answered?

12 DR. TREY RIGERT: Oh, I
13 understand all too well what's going on.

14 MR. DEE WILLIS: How do you
15 spell your last name?

16 MR. TREY RIGERT: R-i-g-e-r-t.

17 MR. DEE WILLIS: People who
18 haven't spoken?

19 MS. CHANDRA RADIANCE: My name
20 is Chandra Radiance.

21 I am wondering how long ago did
22 Hanford start building these certified
23 transuranic waste places?

24 It sounds like it was staged, it
25 probably took several years, and somehow we

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 just heard about this plan to transport this
2 waste.

3 I wasn't aware of this, and I have
4 been coming to every meeting for the last 12
5 years, too, until about six months ago. So I'm
6 kind of curious how that all happened so
7 quickly.

8 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Well,
9 the Waste Receiving and Processing Facility was
10 built in the early '90s and started certifying
11 a portion of the transuranic waste starting in
12 '97 or '98, I believe, and we have been
13 shipping transuranic waste down to New Mexico
14 for the past year and a half.

15 MR. GREG deBRULER: That's
16 contacted handled waste, though.

17 MR. DEE WILLIS: Speak into the
18 mike.

19 MR. GREG deBRULER: It's
20 contact handled waste. Basically, you can move
21 it around by yourself and not get too much dose
22 off of it. So it is contact handled.

23 The remote handled, which is the
24 stuff that ruins your day and your life, they
25 don't have a facility to treat that waste.

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 They are planning to do it because Hanford has
2 a large volume of transuranic remote handled
3 waste that they have to deal with. But, they
4 haven't built it, it's not there yet, and it's
5 soon coming, yeah.

6 His point actually is a good point.
7 You are still going to have to go through the
8 permitting process at Hanford, so why double
9 ship it. Ship it to WIPP. Great idea.

10 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I would
11 also like to say, we cannot get the remote
12 handled certification capabilities until we get
13 through this NEPA process, this EIS, and the
14 subsequent permitting process for that.

15 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel? Who
16 hasn't spoken yet, has a question?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, I
18 have a question but I have spoken.

19 MR. DEE WILLIS: I am going to
20 get people who haven't spoken first.

21 MS. BECKY NELSON: I am Becky
22 Nelson from Hood River. And I have a follow-up
23 question.

24 A couple of meetings ago I was under
25 the impression that the vitrification plant

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 that was being planned was over the course of
2 its life of use, was not going to be able to
3 handle all the waste that should be vitrified
4 at Hanford that was there at the time.

5 So, if we're now taking other
6 people's waste to vitrify, that means less of
7 the waste that was going to be vitrified is
8 going to be vitrified.

9 Is that right?

10 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: None of
11 the waste that we are talking about coming from
12 off-site was ever planned to be vitrified.

13 MS. BECKY NELSON: So it's not
14 being vitrified? It's just being, what is
15 happening to it, then?

16 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: If it's
17 mixed low-level waste, the stuff with the
18 chemical contaminants in it, it will be treated
19 to what is called RCRA requirements, Resource
20 Conservation and Recovery Act requirements, and
21 state law to essentially get rid of the
22 chemical hazard, and then for the radiological
23 hazard, it will be packaged up or sometimes it
24 will be put in a concrete matrix, depending on
25 what's in there, and then disposed of.

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 MS. BECKY NELSON: The remote
2 handled wastes, you are not vitrifying that?

3 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: These
4 remote handled wastes, no.

5 MR. GREG deBRULER: The
6 vitrification, just to clarify, the
7 vitrification process, what they are going to
8 put it into glass, that's for the high-level
9 waste, that's for the tank waste at Hanford,
10 the 177 tanks that hold 53 million gallons of
11 waste. That's going to be vitrified.

12 The Tri-Party Agreement says it's
13 going to be vitrified, but DOE has a new dream
14 that they are only going to vitrify 25 percent.
15 But that's not in this EIS.

16 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel? Okay.
17 I want to take a small break right now.

18 Panel, stay where you are, and I
19 want to invite anybody who has formal comment
20 again to speak, raise your hand.

21 I know Cathy Snieder just came back
22 in. Cathy, where are you?

23 MS. CATHY SNIEDER: I'm right
24 here.

25 MR. DEE WILLIS: So would you

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Panel Discussion (contd); THR-0017

1 like to give comment now?

2 MS. CATHY SNIEDER: Would I
3 like to make my comment?

4 MR. DEE WILLIS: Uh-huh.

5 MS. CATHY SNIEDER: Well, I
6 just got here, so if somebody who hasn't spoken
7 --

8 MR. DEE WILLIS: You want to
9 wait? Okay.

10 MS. CATHY SNIEDER: Yes.

11 MR. DEE WILLIS: Does anybody
12 else have comment?

13 **THR-0017** MS. KAREN HARDING: Karen
14 Harding. Mt. Hood.

15 To add my part to what has already
16 been said, ridiculous amount of time to deal
17 with something this deadly.

18 I work with children and I am
19 concerned that they are going to be inheriting
20 a world where, you know, if it goes to the
21 river, it's going to the ocean as well. And we
22 are killing the world.

23 We need to spend as much money as we
24 spent bombing the hell out of Iraq to clean up
25 the mess, not make any more, just get it over

THR-0017; THR-0018; Panel Discussion (contd)

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1 with.

2 MR. DEE WILLIS: Yes.

3 **THR-0018** MS. SUSAN HESS: Susan Hess,
4 Hood River.

5 There was a railroad derailment that
6 happened just about 20 miles east of here.
7 20,000 gallons of soybean oil was spilled, and
8 EPA was in there within two hours. And all of
9 that soybean oil contaminated soil was trucked
10 out of there within a matter of days.

1 |

11 I just cannot understand why
12 something, which was certainly dangerous to the
13 wildlife, why something that is millions of
14 times more dangerous cannot get the same
15 priority, that something like soybean oil got.

16 Can someone address that? I don't
17 mean to be demeaning, but I truly am puzzled.

18 MR. NICHOLAS CETO: Yeah. And
19 I don't know the circumstances, and I assume
20 that you are right, it was EPA. Sometimes it's
21 actually the state agency.

22 But in either case, EPA has ready
23 and able to go at a moment's notice people for
24 those kind of things. And we take that very
25 seriously as an agency.

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 Sometimes it's soybean oil,
2 sometimes it's lead concentrate from a shipment
3 of oar, sometimes it's a meth lab that we have
4 now had the states doing a lot of that work.

5 But we are ready, we have emergency
6 response crews ready to do that kind of work.

7 At the risk of offending some of the
8 DOE people, I have only been there seven
9 months, and I have found that work there is
10 very slow. It's complicated, certainly. The
11 radiological hazards make it tough. But it's a
12 slow process to get work done out there.

13 They are working to get it done
14 faster, and the irony of it is now that this
15 acceleration which they are proposing is now
16 scaring everyone because they want to go
17 faster.

18 So, I don't know. There is a
19 balance there. They have to go fastener to get
20 the work done. They have to be faster to be
21 credible to all of you that they are trying to
22 get the place cleaned up.

23 So it is really necessary for them
24 to do business differently, to try to convince
25 us all that they can do it cost effectively and

Panel Discussion (contd); THR-0019

1 they can do it right.

2 The answer to, part of the answer to
3 the question is there is an awful lot of work
4 getting done, and I can tell you for every bit
5 of soybean oil that was picked up on that date
6 that you have, there was probably 20 times as
7 much contaminated soil removed from the river
8 corridor at Hanford and moved to safe storage.

9 So it's not that things aren't
10 happening. Unfortunately you don't hear the
11 good news that happens every day.

12 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel? Okay.
13 Before we go on to questions for the Panel,
14 does anybody else want to offer comment to DOE?
15 Sir.

16 **THR-0019** MR. TOM MODRICH: My name is
17 Tom Modrich from Hood River, a local building
18 contractor.

19 If we have been given this deadline
20 of tomorrow to start shipping, where is the
21 news people in this, where is the newspapers?

22 I believe it would be on the DOE to
23 provide, you know, coverage on this for the
24 world's news. Just these 30 people are the
25 ones that know about it and we sit here, and

THR-0019 (contd); Panel Discussion (contd)

1 where is everybody else?

2 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Well, I
3 know DOE puts out press releases on these types
4 of things. Whether they were picked up by the
5 media, I don't know. We don't control the
6 media, so. . .

7 MR. TOM MODRICH: It just seems
8 like it's a really small amount, it's such a
9 big problem.

10 MR. GREG deBRULER: The lady
11 behind you, she works for the office of public
12 involvement. Maybe she's got something.

13 MS. MARLA MARVIN: My name is
14 Marla Marvin, and I am the director of
15 communications at the Hanford Site.

16 And somebody here said that they
17 heard on the radio that they were going to
18 start shipments tomorrow. And I think they
19 were referring back a couple of months, I think
20 he even said that, and he woke up and he heard
21 this on the radio, that this was going to
22 happen tomorrow.

23 And those shipments started in
24 November, and those were the shipments from
25 Battelle Columbus. And those did start, and

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 there is this lawsuit, and so those are no
2 longer coming into the Hanford Site.

3 But shipments are going out of
4 Hanford Site. So I think that that's really
5 this tomorrow thing, that's where all the
6 confusion started, I think.

7 MR. DEE WILLIS: George, did
8 you want to . . .

9 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: George
10 Sanders again. We do have two shipments
11 scheduled to leave Hanford this week for WIPP.
12 So I don't know if that's a part of it.

13 MR. DEE WILLIS: Going where,
14 George?

15 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: To the
16 Waste Isolation Plant in New Mexico. So there
17 were two outbound. If that helps any.

18 MS. MARLA MARVIN: What kind
19 of --

20 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: They are
21 transuranic shipments.

22 MR. GREG deBRULER: That's
23 contact handled shipments.

24 MR. GEORGE SANDERS: The
25 contact handled shipments. They are part of

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