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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING THE NRC HEARING PROCESS

U.S. NRC
11555 Rockville Pike
Commission Hearing Room
Rockville, Maryland

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

The above-entitled meeting commenced, pursuant to notice, at
8:46 a.m.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

[8:46 a.m.]

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3 CAMERON: Good morning, everybody, and welcome to the NRC's
4 public workshop on potential revisions to the NRC hearing process.

5 My name is Chip Cameron, and I'm the Special Counsel for
6 Public Liaison here at the Commission, and I'm happy to serve as your
7 facilitator for today's meeting.

8 As all of you know by now, the Commission issued a staff
9 requirements memorandum that directed the staff to evaluate potential
10 changes to the Commission's hearing process and procedures and to
11 develop a draft proposed rule on that subject for Commission review.

12 The Commission has directed the Office of General Counsel to
13 evaluate what changes should be made to the NRC hearing process, and the
14 Commission also believed that it would be useful to get some early
15 public perspectives on these issues.

16 So, consequently, we have asked the group around this table
17 and the audience to be with us today to have a discussion on hearing
18 process issues, and in a few minutes, we're going to go around and do
19 some introductions, but we do have a impressive, and I would say,
20 intriguing group of people around the table representing various
21 affected interests that are affected by the Commission's hearing
22 process, and the General Counsel hopes that, through a dialogue among
23 all of you, that there will be some good information developed that she
24 can then use to proceed with drafting this proposed rule, identifying
25 what are the problems, are there any problems, what are the options for
addressing those problems, and what are the advantages and disadvantages
of those various options, and as your facilitator, I'm going to try to
help you do a couple of things over the next day-and-a-half.

One is to keep the discussion relevant and focused and not
only relevant to whatever particular agenda topic that we're on at the

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1 time but also to try to help you develop discussion threads so that we
2 don't just jump from one unrelated point to another, that we try to tie
3 some of these points together.

4 Secondly, I may ask you to clarify your statement so that
5 everybody understands the rationale behind a particular statement that
6 you make.

7 I will try to keep track of any recommendations or action
8 items that are developed as part of this discussion, hopefully keep us
9 on schedule, and finally, make sure that everybody had a chance to talk,
10 and in that regard, our ground rules are simple for this discussion.

11 If you want to speak, if you could just turn your name tent
12 up on end like that, and I'll keep track of that, and that way, you
13 won't have to keep your hand in the air, keep raising your hand, and
14 also, it helps to have only one person speaking at a time.

15 It will allow us to get a clean transcript. Jon is our
16 stenographer over there, and he's been through this drill before, and he
17 does know who you are in terms of where you're sitting, but at least at
18 the very beginning, if you could just state your name for the transcript
19 when you talk.

20 Not all of the points that are going to be made are going to
21 fit squarely within the agenda item that we're dealing with.

22 So, I'll try to keep track of things that come up that we
23 might want to revisit later on in the process, and the focus of the
24 discussion is down here at the table, but we also do want to hear from
25 the audience, and so, we will be going out to those of you in the
audience who want to comment at the end of each major discussion topic.

What I'd like to do now, before we get into an agenda
overview -- and I have one suggested change that I want to explore with
& you.

I thought it might be useful at this point to have everybody

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1 introduce themselves, and if you could just give us your name and
2 affiliation and one or two sentences on what your interest or concern in
3 this particular process is, and what I'm going to do is I'm going to
4 start with Paul Bollwerk, who's chairman of our licensing board panel.

5 Paul?

6 BOLLWERK: My name is Paul Bollwerk. I'm am the Chief
7 Administrative Judge with the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel,
8 the Commission body that handles the agency adjudications both for
9 licensing and enforcement actions, and my interest here is, obviously,
10 seeing there's a fair and full hearing process that's put together.

11 CAMERON: Why don't we go to Tony?

12 ROISMAN: I'm Tony Roisman. I'm with a law firm in Vermont
13 -- Christianson, Carter, Scott, McGee. I've not been involved in
14 nuclear licensing matters for a long time, and I guess I'm here on a
15 historical preservation task.

16 LUBBERS: I'm Jeffrey Lubbers. I teach administrative law
17 at Washington College of Law, American University. Before that, I was
18 -- for about 12 years, I was a research director at the Administrative
19 Conference of the United States, looking at administrative procedure
20 reform issues.

21 HEIFETZ: I'm Alan Heifetz. I'm the Chief Administrative
22 Law Judge at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. I've
23 worked with Professor Lubbers at the Administrative Conference. I was a
24 member for nine years and was the chairman of a group that drafted model
25 rules of practice and procedure for administrative agencies.

I also have heard and decided cases for 19 different
departments and agencies of the United States Government, not including
the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

CURRAN: My name is Diane Curran. I'm a lawyer with the law
firm of Harmon, Curran, Spielberg & Eisenberg. For almost 20 years,

1 I've been representing citizen groups and state and local governments in
2 NRC licensing cases.

3 I'm very interested in preserving what fairness remains in
4 the NRC licensing process, and I feel like I've -- a little bit like
5 I've been invited to plan my own funeral today.

6 ZAMEK: I'm Jill Zamek. I'm with the grassroots group,
7 citizens group, Mothers for Peace, in California, and I've used the --
8 well, we've used the hearing process over the years, and so, I'm
9 interested to see what changes you're planning.

10 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Jill.

11 MURPHY: I'm Mal Murphy. I'm the Regulatory and Licensing
12 Advisor to the Nye County, Nevada, Nuclear Waste Repository Project
13 Office.

14 So, obviously, my principle interest is the potential
15 application of any changes in the licensing process to the high-level
16 waste repository, but I'm interested in the rest of the process, as
17 well. Principally, my focus will be on the high-level waste issue.

18 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Mal.

19 Mike?

20 MCGARRY: I'm Mike McGarry. I went to the dentist this
21 morning, so I've got novocaine on the side of my mouth. I'm with the
22 law firm of Winston & Strawn. I have practiced for a number of years
23 before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, tried cases with Tony Roisman,
24 Diane Curran, and like Paul Bollwerk, I'm interested in a fair
25 administrative hearing process.

KOHN: My name is Stephen Kohn. I'm here with the National
Whistle-Blowers Center, and I'm an attorney, and I've represented
whistle-blowers in nuclear facilities for a number of years, and
intervenor in licensing proceedings.

HIATT: My name is Susan Hiatt. I direct the Ohio Citizens

1 for Responsible Energy. We have been intervenors in the operating
2 license proceeding for the Perry nuclear power plant in Ohio. My
3 interest is in trying to preserve a fair and meaningful process for
4 public participants.

5 RICCIO: Good morning. My name is Jim Riccio. I'm the
6 staff attorney for Public Citizen's critical mass energy project.
7 Public Citizen has brought several lawsuits against the NRC and the
8 industry, and I'm here to see that our rights are protected.

9 SILBERG: I'm Jay Silberg, a partner at Shaw Pittman,
10 Washington law firm, and representing licensees in NRC hearings and AEC
11 hearing since 1969, and before that, for a years, with the Atomic Energy
12 Commission, and our purpose here is to try to assure that the
13 Commission's procedural rules are both fair and efficient for all
14 parties.

15 BACKUS: I'm Bob Backus from New Hampshire. I'm a lawyer
16 with the law firm of Backus, Meyer, Solomon, Rood & Branch, and along
17 with Tony Roisman, I spent years and years in the licensing process over
18 the Seabrook plant and in subsequent licensings, as well.

19 I'm currently writing a history of that, calling Seabrook
20 the Parrot Victory. I think the subtitle is going to be "We Told You
21 So," and I'm still representing clients that may appear in NRC licensing
22 hearings.

23 THOMPSON: My name is Tony Thompson. I'm a partner at Shaw
24 Pittman. I represent mostly uranium recovery licensees. I'm here on
25 behalf of the National Mining Associations Uranium Recovery
Environmental Subcommittee, and I'm primarily focused on preserving or
making sure that the informal hearing process is fair and efficient.

26 GINSBERG: I'm Ellen Ginsberg. I'm Deputy General Counsel
of the Nuclear Energy Institute. Prior to that, I was a law clerk when
Tony was litigating the Comanche Peak case, law clerk for the NRC at the

1 Atomic Safety Licensing Board Panel, and I represent the industry's
2 overall interest, and our interest is ensuring that the NRC implements a
3 fair and efficient process to resolve the legal and technical issues
4 that come before it.

5 EDGAR: I'm George Edgar. I'm a partner in the law firm of
6 Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. I represent nuclear licensees, and I, too, am
7 here to see that the process, if changed, is fair, efficient, and
8 effective.

9 GRAY: I'm Joe Gray, Associate General Counsel for Licensing
10 and Regulation at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

11 Some years ago I was a hearing attorney and hearing division
12 branch chief. Since then I've been in various positions in the
13 Commission and most recently the current one.

14 In this current position, our division will be working on
15 any rule-making that results from these discussions and the Commission's
16 desire to re-examine the hearing process.

17 CHANDLER: I'm Larry Chandler. I'm Associate General
18 Counsel for Hearings, Enforcement, and Administration.

19 Since 1972, I've represented the staff or I've been
20 responsible for the representation of the Commission staff in all
21 administrative proceedings relating to the licensing of reactor
22 facilities and litigation related to materials licensing and enforcement
23 proceedings.

24 Like Joe, we're interested in assuring that any regulatory
25 changes move in the direction of assuring a full, fair, and effective
and efficient process for the development of a sound record from which
Commission decisions can be drawn.

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CAMERON: Okay. Thank you all, and thank you for taking
your time to be here today and a half-day tomorrow, and what I'd like to
do now is just go over the agenda and perhaps suggest one change to you

1 on the agenda, and bear with us.

2 The microphones -- the audio is not really working, but we
3 have sent for someone to come down and help us out with that.

4 Luckily, the stenographer can hear, and I hope all of you
5 can hear around the table, but we'll try to improve this so that the
6 audience can hear this.

7 When we put together the agenda, we not only tried to make
8 sure it covered all of the important issues in some sort of logical
9 sequence but also to try to ensure that it didn't reflect any bias in
10 terms of a particular result that we want to -- or that the NRC wants to
11 come out of this particular meeting, and we hope that it doesn't reflect
12 any bias.

13 We're going to get started this morning with a little bit of
14 context from Larry Chandler on just an overview of the NRC hearing
15 process, and we do want that to be a context and not really to spark our
16 discussion at that point, but if there are some clarifying questions
17 that you want to ask Larry at the end of that, we can take those.

18 We were then going to move into a presentation by Professor
19 Jeff Lubbers from American University on emerging issues and addressing
20 the degree of formality in agency adjudication.

21 Now, you'll notice that, if you look, after the break, we
22 were going to get started in our first discussion area with what do we
23 want to see come out of a hearing process? What are the objectives that
24 we want to achieve?

25 And this probably does you no good at all, since you can't
read it, but it is part of Attachment 3, it is in Attachment 3 to the
SECY paper, and this was an attempt to lay out what some of the
performance goals or objectives of the hearing process might be, and our
opening discussion is going to be to talk about some of those goals or
performance objectives.

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1 Are those the correct ones? Do we want to add anything to
2 those? Are there conflicts between those goals, and how do we go about
3 trying to resolve trade-offs between these various objectives?

4 The two items right after lunch are going to start to get to
5 this issue of how do we characterize a formal process versus an informal
6 process, and the agenda change that I thought might be useful was,
7 rather than having Jeff Lubbers at 9:30 this morning, is to put him on
8 before we get to the 1:15 and 2:15 items.

9 In other words, he's going to be talking about informal and
10 formal processes, and I thought that might be a useful introduction to
11 those items.

12 Does anybody have any problem with doing that shift? It's
13 okay with Jeff.

14 [No response.]

15 CAMERON: Okay. Well, we'll do that, and when Larry's done,
16 we'll take some questions, and then we'll go into the objectives of the
17 hearing process, and then we're going to have Jeff Lubbers, with his
18 presentation, and we'll see how we do in terms of the time slots for
19 these.

20 Then we'll go into the 1:15 and 2:15 sessions in that
21 sequence, and this afternoon, at 3:30, we take -- try to marry these
22 items in terms of how do the formal and informal processes meet these
23 objectives that we're talking about, and you can see we have some
24 questions after each of these items to try to stimulate some discussion,
25 and we're going to try to get -- we'll get out of here about 5:15 today,
and then, tomorrow morning, we're going to come back and see if we can
do a summary of that, how do informal and formal processes compare to
the objectives that we talked about?

At 9:30 tomorrow, we're going to get to a discussion of is a
particular process more appropriate for one type of hearing than

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1 another?

2 We heard Mal talk about the fact that he's interested in the
3 high-level waste proceeding.

4 Tony talked about the types of proceedings that he's usually
5 involved in, so that we'll explore that particular issue, and the last
6 issue is, apart from trying to come up with new, informal processes, are
7 there changes that should be made to the Commission's hearing
8 procedures, generally, that would result in fairness, efficiency, any of
9 these other goals, and some of you are going to have to, I know, be out
10 of the room at particular times to do various things.

11 In other words, some people are not going to be here for the
12 whole day-and-a-half, but I think that there's enough of a feedback loop
13 between all of these different discussion items so that, if you have a
14 major point that you want to make it's going to get into the discussion
15 and on the record today.

16 So, with that, are there any questions on the agenda or any
17 comments on the agenda before we get started?

18 Yes. Steve?

19 KOHN: Yes. You sent to us, just recently, about a week
20 ago, I guess, the July 22nd memo.

21 CAMERON: Steve is referring to the -- I believe -- the
22 Commission -- what's called the staff requirements memorandum that was
23 issued in response to the SECY paper, 99-006, that was sent up.

24 Yes. Go ahead.

25 KOHN: And is the meeting here today limited to a discussion
of the rule-making aspect, or is there going to be discussion on the
legislative aspect? This says there's going to be legislation.

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CAMERON: Let me say a few words about that, then I will see
if Larry Chandler or Joe Gray want to say anything.

In the Federal Register notice that announced this meeting,

1 there was a statement in there that we were not going to focus on the --
2 what I call the scope of authority issue for a number of reasons, one of
3 which is we're not sure that whatever proposed rules that come out of
4 this -- we're not sure that there will be implications for the scope of
5 authority issue.

6 Secondly, we didn't think that there would be -- it would be
7 really productive to spend a lot of time debating the scope of authority
8 issue versus talking about some of the policy issues of concern here.

9 So, that is not going to be a topic for discussion.

10 That doesn't mean that, if any of you want to make a
11 statement at some point about your belief on that particular issue, that
12 it's inappropriate for you to put that on the table. That would be
13 fine. It's just that it doesn't seem that there's much usefulness in
14 having a discussion on that.

15 If it remains an issue when the proposed rule comes out,
16 then there will be plenty of opportunity to offer a full exposition of
17 whatever your feelings are on that.

18 KOHN: Just so I understand where we're at, this discussion
19 essentially assumes that there's no right to an on-the-record hearing,
20 that the Commission essentially, through existing authority or through
21 this legislation, will have almost complete discretion on setting up
22 whatever hearing procedures it wants, and we're here to essentially give
23 input into that discretion that the Commission will exercise. Is that
24 essentially what's happening?

25 CAMERON: I would say that the Commission is looking for --
and I don't mean to dismiss or not emphasize the scope of authority
issue, but the objective is to focus on the policy aspects of it and to
assume suspend disbelief, even though you can offer your opinion on it,
& that the Commission does have the authority to do it, and I would ask,
ASS Larry or Joe, do you have anything to add to that?
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1 GRAY: Only that I think we should assume, for purposes of
2 discussions around here, that the Commission has broad discretion to
3 fashion appropriate processes and procedures for hearings and focus on
4 what kind of processes and procedures should it look to, as opposed to
5 questions about the authority.

6 KOHN: And just for the record, our participation here does
7 not mean we agree with that legal position.

8 CAMERON: Yeah. And let's put a real fine point on that,
9 that we don't look at anybody's participation here as agreeing with that
10 particular statement that Joe made, okay?

11 Any other comments on that particular point?

12 [No response.]

13 CAMERON: Okay.

14 Anything else on the agenda generally, before we get
15 started?

16 [No response.]

17 CAMERON: All right.

18 Well, let's turn it over to Larry for sort of an overview on
19 the NRC hearing process, and then we'll take some questions, and then
20 we'll move into a discussion of objectives.

21 Larry?

22 CHANDLER: Looking around the table, it's sort of clear that
23 I can go through my presentation in, I think, a rather brief way.

24 Most of you, many of you, at least, have had experience
25 before the Commission in formal proceedings, what we refer to as formal
proceedings, and many of you, as well, in informal proceedings, and what
I'd like to do in the next couple of minutes is just, from a very
generalized and high level, present sort of broad distinctions in the
way the Commission has approached its various adjudicatory licensing and
enforcement processes.

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1 I don't plan to get into real detail about the procedures
2 that are involved.

3 I don't plan to get into how the Commission's various policy
4 statements may affect the implementations of the -- implementation of
5 the Commission's regulations, really just sort of to set the stage in a
6 very -- as I said before -- generalized way about how we might proceed
7 in the future.

8 I'd refer all of you again to what I consider at least to be
9 a pretty good discussion of the Commission's views on its hearing
10 obligations, which is found in its decision back in 1982, in the Kerr
11 McGee/West Chicago proceeding.

12 That's at -- I think it's Attachment 1 to the staff papers,
13 that SECY 99-006, where the Commission lays out from both an Atomic
14 Energy Act and constitutional standpoint its views on what its
15 obligations are in terms of conducting various types of proceedings,
16 formal and informal, relative to the different kinds of licensing
17 activities that it engages in.

18 As I'm sure most, if not all, of you know, the Commission
19 historically has used a rather formal type of process in connection with
20 licensing, especially licensing reactor facilities.

21 It's very much a courtroom type of adjudication. It's had
22 the full set of trappings commonly associated with courtroom trials.

23 It involves a motion practice, discovery through the use of
24 depositions, interrogatories, request for document production,
25 opportunities to seek summary disposition, presentation of testimony by
live witnesses and cross examination of witnesses, submission of
post-hearing submittals such as findings of fact, conclusions of law,
opportunities for oral argument, in a framework in which literal
& adherence to rules of evidence is not mandate.

The process starts, I suppose -- it establishes a pretty

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1 high threshold for participation, and that's an area, I know, that many
2 of you have spoken to over the years in different ways.

3 It requires not only establishing conventional standing but
4 the submission of intentions to demonstrate that there exists a genuine
5 issue of material fact such that a hearing, an adjudicatory hearing, is
6 truly warranted.

7 In addition, the process includes an appellate process.

8 For many years, that included an intermediate review stage
9 before a three-member Atomic Safety and Licensing Appeal Board as a
10 matter of right, prior to an opportunity to request a discretionary or
11 certinary type of review before the Commission.

12 That intermediate step, the Atomic Safety and Licensing
13 Appeal Board panel, was abolished in stages, I guess, actually,
14 commencing in about 1990, but other than that the process has remained
15 unchanged to this point today.

16 In the mid-'80s, the Commission, in response to the Nuclear
17 Waste Policy Act of 1982, promulgated a new set of regulations.

18 Limited in scope, they apply to spent fuel storage
19 proceedings.

20 Those regulations are found in sub-part K to 10 CFR Part 2,
21 as opposed to the other proceedings I was alluding to earlier, which are
22 in sub-part G.

23 Those procedures, the sub-part K procedures, have been
24 invoked, as far as I can recall, actually only twice, and I think only
25 now, in one proceeding, are being implemented fully. The first
proceeding was terminated rather abruptly a number of years ago.

Sub-part K is a hybrid process.

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It's essentially -- my characterization would be a summary
disposition process within the envelope of a sub-part G proceeding,
based on oral argument, with written facts and data in support of that,

1 which is designed to identify the issues on which there truly are
2 genuine and substantial disputes which require resolution through
3 adjudication.

4 In the later 1980s, the Commission concluded that the
5 formality that it generally associated with hearings related to reactor
6 facilities was not necessary in connection with all its proceedings, and
7 I think, again, that Kerr McGee discussion gives you a pretty full
8 picture of the Commission's thinking on that, and in 1989, the
9 Commission developed what it refers to as an informal hearing process,
10 and that's a question I think we'll spend some time over the next day or
11 so talking about, informal hearing process, which is found in sub-part
12 L.

13 Unlike the sub-part G process, which is conducted before a
14 three-member Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, sub-part L proceedings
15 are conducted before a single presiding officer, today often assisted by
16 a technical assistant.

17 These are, for all intents and purposes, a paper proceeding.

18 The NRC staff may or may not be a party to them.
19 Contentions are not filed but, rather, the requirement is that the
20 parties, an intervenor, identify not just standing but areas of concern,
21 a more generalized standard, and it's generally a lower threshold for
22 admission.

23 Discovery is replaced by the compilation and distribution of
24 something referred to as a hearing file, which the staff puts together
25 and provides to all parties and to the presiding officer.

26 Examination and cross-examination of live witnesses is
27 replaced by the submission of written presentations by all parties, and
28 rebuttal submissions, as well, often in various stages.

29 Sub-part L does permit for more formality if the presiding
30 officer determines it's warranted.

1 It can include the submission of proposed written questions
2 which would be propounded by the presiding officer.

3 It could even call for the presentation and examination of
4 live witnesses if, again, the presiding officer determines that it's
5 necessary for the development of an adequate record.

6 The sub-part L procedures are now used in connection with
7 material licensing proceedings, reactor operator licensing proceedings,
8 and would be used in connection with reactor licensing proceedings
9 following permanent cessation in operation and removal of fuel from
10 reactor facilities.

11 Again, typically in connection with reactor cases and
12 enforcement cases, the more formal sub-part G procedures continue to
13 apply.

14 Most recently, the Commission developed a new hearing
15 process, which again is limited in scope. It's essentially to be used
16 in connection with license transfer proceedings.

17 These procedures, these new regulations, are found in
18 sub-part M to 10 CFR Part 2.

19 Procedures were laid out in recognition of the narrower
20 scope of the issues that are relevant to the transfer proceedings, as
21 well as a recognition of the desire for improving the efficiency of the
22 licensing process and taking advantage of the flexibility the Commission
23 has to device suitable procedures with due regard for the due process
24 rights of the parties and in the interest of providing a fair and
25 efficient process to all participants, members of the public, applicants
and licensees alike.

 The procedures in sub-part M provide for a more direct and
active role by the Commission at the outset.

 In fact, it contemplates the Commission would be the
presiding officer unless it designates otherwise and expects that the

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1 Commission would be very involved in delineating case-specific
2 procedures, perhaps schedules, to assure the expeditious conduct of
3 these proceedings.

4 It retains essentially the high threshold that you find in
5 sub-part G in terms of the submittal of contentions, but like the
6 sub-part L proceeding, the sub-part M process does not mandate
7 participation of the NRC staff, although it does explicitly provide that
8 the staff safety evaluation will be offered through sponsoring witnesses
9 in any proceeding.

10 Again, much like a sub-part L proceeding, discovery is much
11 more limited. In this instance, however, it's confined to something
12 called a hearing docket, which is maintained by the Secretary.

13 Hearings are generally expected to be oral hearings,
14 although if the parties agree, they can be conducted solely on the basis
15 of written presentations.

16 Proposed cross-examination would be submitted to the
17 presiding officer, who is charged with conducting examination of
18 witnesses at a hearing, and of course, if the Commission determines that
19 it's appropriate and necessary, it can order additional procedures,
20 including, in fact, conducting proceedings under sub-part G.

21 That, in a nutshell, I think, are the main procedures that
22 are available.

23 I've avoided getting into the sub-part J processes which
24 relate to the high-level waste proceeding. They don't, in large part,
25 pertain to the actual conduct of the proceeding, and so, I have not
gotten into those.

Anybody that's got any other thoughts or contributions to
that, just -- again, to sort of set the stage for where we'll be going.

CAMERON: Are there any questions for Larry about that
context that he provided?

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1 Bob?

2 BACKUS: If the system does not change, which of those
3 sub-parts would the Commission be using most of the time, would you
4 think? I mean where is most of the Commission's business these days?
5 Obviously it isn't for construction permits. So, where is the bulk of
6 the process going to go in these various sub-parts as you see it right
7 now?

8 CHANDLER: I think, if you look at the current cases that we
9 see coming in, we have a fairly substantial number of cases coming in in
10 enforcement cases which are sub-part G cases and I think would probably
11 most likely continue to be more formal types of proceedings in the
12 future.

13 In addition, we see some number of reactor license
14 amendments come in. Under current practice, those are sub-part G,
15 formal procedure-type cases.

16 We see a small number of reactor operator licensing cases
17 come in. Those are sub-part L formal processing -- informal process,
18 and we see some reasonable number of materials licensing proceedings
19 come in. Those are sub-part L, as well.

20 The very large part of what we're seeing coming in today is
21 under sub-part M in connection with license transfer proceedings. We
22 haven't had all that many contested.

23 We are seeing an increased number of those come in, and I
24 think we've seen a couple of recent decisions in that regard in
25 connection with, more recently, the Seabrook, Millstone cases.

CAMERON: Okay. Let's go to Susan and then we'll go to
Alan.

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Susan?

HIATT: There's something that is, in my view, missing in
this whole agenda, and that is a demonstration of a need for change.

1 I am reminded of the adage of folk wisdom, if you might,
2 that you should not try to fix that which is not broken, and I have not
3 seen, either in the SECY paper or even a place on the agenda, for a
4 determination that the process is so deficient right now that it needs
5 such fundamental revision. I would like someone to address that.

6 CHANDLER: I'll give you a thought on that.

7 I'm not sure that -- you used the word "fundamental"
8 revision. I'm not sure that you need to think of this and our
9 discussions as being driven by a need for wholesale, fundamental change,
10 as opposed to a fresh look at the procedures that we currently have and
11 thoughts and suggestions as to whether those procedures should be
12 changed, can be changed, and if so, how, to assure that all participants
13 in this process, various processes, are afforded an efficient and fair
14 opportunity to contribute to a decisional record from which licensing
15 action decisions can be based.

16 I don't think they're foregone conclusions, I don't think
17 there's a pre-ordained outcome to the process, save for the direction to
18 really take a hard look at what we've been doing and how we've been
19 doing it. I mean that's the way I tend to read it.

20 CAMERON: Let me suggest -- I think this is going to be a
21 useful initial discussion topic, is there a need for change, and it
22 leads us right into the objectives or performance goals, and let's get
23 some -- let's get the questions out of the way and then go into this is
24 there a need for change discussion.

25 Ellen, did you have something on that?

GINSBURG: Mine is in the nature of an answer, actually.

The question was asked about what hearings are we anticipated being --
where the concentration of hearings is going to be held, and I didn't
hear you say license renewal, and the industry has lined up -- I think
there are 22 or so plants scheduled that have been announced for license

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1 renewal, and those will be, potentially, available for hearings.

2 CHANDLER: That's correct, and that's a sub-part G formal
3 proceeding.

4 CAMERON: Okay.

5 Steve, did you have a question, or did you want to get off
6 on Susan's topic?

7 KOHN: You predicted it, but the -- I agree -- I think the
8 issue here really comes down to license renewal. Anyone who's watched
9 the process over the last 10 years -- there have been some licensing
10 proceedings, but license renewal, taking the plant from a 40-year to a
11 60-year life-span, with all of the issues of the operating history of a
12 plant and potential discovery and hearings into how that 20- or 30- or
13 40-year operating history may impact on renewing it for another 20 years
14 -- I think the industry wants to eliminate licensing hearings as
15 formerly known for the renewal process, and the Commission also wants to
16 eliminate it, because the Commission wants to encourage license
17 renewals, and any operating plant that undergoes a license renewal
18 process risks discovery into their current operation and into how that
19 current operation will impact on future operation.

20 That's really what's happening. If it wasn't for the push
21 for license renewal, this meeting would not be happening, and my major
22 concern is that the very reasons why the AEC wanted on the record formal
23 hearings in the 1950s, if anything, has increased numerous times in the
24 types of issues that should be litigated in the renewal context, and
25 that's why the whole discussion about how to make it less formal and
give the public less rights -- what really needs to happen is there
needs to be a formal discussion on how to increase public participation,
and that's where this agenda should be moving.

For example, discovery: Well, why aren't the operating
records of an existing plant made more fully open and accessible? All

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1 the types of logs and the minutia that real experts would need to look
2 at to see if a plant should have a license renewal.

3 So, I view the direction that the Commission has clearly set
4 as a matter of policy the absolute wrong direction, and I think that's
5 really why this whole debate is happening.

6 CAMERON: I think that we're getting launched into this
7 discussion, and I know there's going to be some comments on that
8 particular point.

9 So, unless there's any questions of clarification for Larry
10 on this -- and I just would remind even the NRC folks to use their
11 cards. There's no dispensation for you people.

12 Why don't we explore Susan's question in terms of is there a
13 need for change?

14 I think I hear Steve suggesting, among a lot of other
15 things, that perhaps the motivation for this is license renewal.

16 I don't want to, you know, put any words into his mouth, but
17 let's have a discussion on that, and I would ask our guests who are here
18 from a more neutral standpoint, Alan and Jeff, maybe you have some
19 comments from your experience with either other agencies or your agency
20 about what usually sparks the need for prompting change in these types
21 of procedures.

22 Jay, are you going to go to this? Is there a need for
23 change? Okay.

24 SILBERG: There are really two points that I'd like to make
25 on the need for change.

First is that there have been, historically, in recent
history, a number of NRC licensing cases that have been held up as how
not to do it, cases that ran on interminably, that didn't reach decision
either for or against, where issues were held over for long periods of
time, case studies on how an adjudicatory process of any stripe should

1 not operate.

2 I think that's one reason for why a change needs to be
3 looked at.

4 The second reason that I'd note is that the Commission's
5 hearing process has begun to grow.

6 Larry outlined a number of different procedural options that
7 are now in the rules, but no one, I think, has really sat back and taken
8 a hard look at why does one have this kind of procedural steps but
9 another doesn't, do we really need all of these different formats, have
10 they been done in a coherent and thought through in a logical, coherent
11 way?

12 It seems as if a particular need has arisen or a particular
13 congressional bill has provided an opportunity to create a unique
14 mechanism, but no one has sat down from first principles and figured out
15 how the hearing process ought to work, and I think this is a good
16 opportunity to do that.

17 We don't have now a large number of pending cases as we did
18 in the '70s and the '80s. So, I think this is a good time, perhaps, to
19 take a break, take a breather, step back, and look logically at what
20 ought we have to have as the hearing process.

21 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Jay, and I want to try to see if we
22 can follow up on that last point.

23 Of course, the first point you made is important, but your
24 second point suggests that maybe this is an opportune time to take a
25 look at the hearing process that has just been -- there's been various
procedures grafted on over the years, and perhaps that's where these
performance objectives come in, is to take a look at the existing
hearing process through that lens of those performance objectives.

Does anyone want to comment on Jay's point about the hearing
process has grown and it's time for a change at this point?

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1 Diane?

2 CURRAN: I would be curious to know what plants are on Jay's
3 list of cases that didn't work, and it's certainly been my observation
4 that one of the cases perceived by the industry and some members of
5 Congress has not having worked was the Louisiana Energy Services case,
6 where a citizens group effectively prevailed, and some very complex
7 issues were raised and litigated before a licensing board.

8 The licensing board took longer than the Commission and the
9 applicant would have wished to decide, but it was in the hearing phase
10 that the issues were really put to the test, and my observation has been
11 that there's been tremendous fallout from that, that there's a
12 perception that the public should be involved up to a point but not to
13 the point where it could actually have an effective voice in the outcome
14 of a licensing case.

15 I am one who very much favors the formal proceedings for
16 licensing for the sole reason that there is a very uneven playing field
17 in a nuclear licensing case.

18 All of the information, the relevant information, is
19 generally in the hands of the company and the NRC staff, and to simply
20 say, well, let's put a hearing file in the public document room, very
21 selective process that doesn't allow the citizen group to get at the
22 kind of detailed information that can actually allow that group to be an
23 effective participant in the licensing decision.

24 I think the hurdles for the admissibility of contentions are
25 one way that the Commission has tried to limit the effectiveness that
intervenor can have. The very tight time-frames on the amount of time
that one gets to prepare one's case is another big problem.

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The lack of completeness of the application when the case is
docketed for hearing, which puts a tremendous burden on the intervenor
to be constantly amending its pleadings in order to stay in the case --

1 these are all very burdensome measures that the Commission has
2 instituted in order to limit the effectiveness of intervenors in formal
3 proceedings.

4 Nevertheless, on the other side of the ledger, there is the
5 opportunity for discovery of important information.

6 In spite of all the difficulties in participating in a
7 formal licensing hearing, in that case, a citizen group was able to use
8 the process to really bring issues before a licensing board and get a
9 favorable determination from the licensing board, and at least one of
10 those was upheld by the Commissioners.

11 I feel that it's completely uphill to participate in a
12 formal adjudication at all, that the Commission has pushed the public to
13 the absolute margin of effective participation in an NRC licensing case,
14 but to go beyond that and to render the proceedings completely informal
15 and deprive the public of that access to information would make it not
16 worthwhile to even participate in most of these cases.

17 CAMERON: Okay. We're going to get to that last point,
18 obviously, is going to be the heart of our discussion.

19 Now, there was a question that Diane posed to Jay, and I
20 don't know if Jay has an answer for it.

21 SILBERG: I'll be happy to answer it.

22 CAMERON: One point for the group is that -- Diane brought
23 up a couple of points that I think go to these objectives again. In
24 other words, more information needs to be disclosed.

25 I suppose that that fits under the transparency performance
objective, or maybe we need to add to the performance objectives.

 She talked about the existing contention standard really not
being a model of fairness.

 Again, I'm trying to link to these performance objectives,
but before we go to Jay, Diane, would you agree that, from the

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1 perspective of these two points that you brought up, you would think
2 that there should be some changes to the hearing process or procedure in
3 perhaps this regard. Would that be correct?

4 CURRAN: Yes.

5 CAMERON: Okay. Good. So, there are some suggestions from
6 a point of view of a couple of different performance objectives that we
7 might talk about in terms of change.

8 Let's let Jay give his comment to Diane, and then let's go
9 to Joe Gray and Jim Riccio and then over to Tony.

10 Jay?

11 SILBERG: Yeah. Diane's correct. I mean the LES case is
12 certainly one of the ones that we think was not a model of how cases
13 should be done. It wasn't the fact that the result at the licensing
14 board level, at least, was unfavorable. It's the fact that the case
15 took seven years under a system that Congress enacted to make cases go
16 quickly.

17 And the other case was the license transfer case for
18 Southern Nuclear.

19 Now, if one goes back a little bit to the end of the
20 operating license regime, we also had a number of cases that were very
21 difficult to bring to conclusion, you know, Seabrook, Shoreham, Comanche
22 Peak.

23 There are lots of aspects of any of those cases that one can
24 look at, some of which work, some of which doesn't -- didn't, and I
25 think if you want to draw lessons learned, you have to look at each one
of them and see what went wrong, what went right, and try to draw the
lessons accordingly.

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CAMERON: Jay, you're suggesting that we need to put a finer
point on some of these examples of cases that, quote, "didn't work,"
unquote, to see what exactly was wrong, to get away from the standpoint

1 of the belief that people have, perhaps, that you think that -- people
2 think they're flawed only because the result was the opposite of what a
3 particular interest wanted to see.

4 SILBERG: Correct.

5 CAMERON: Okay.

6 Let's go to Joe, and then we'll go to Jim and Tony, then
7 we'll come over here to Jill and Steve and Susan.

8 Go ahead, Joe.

9 GRAY: I want to get back to Steve's point about motivation
10 for change.

11 I don't know what the motivation was, but I do think that
12 the Commission has looked at the pilot procedures that are in place, and
13 picking up on Jay's point, we've got sub-part G, sub-part J, sub-part K,
14 sub-part L, sub-part M. We've got also a 10 CFR Part 110, sub-part I,
15 for export licensing hearing processes.

16 There are a lot of procedures. There are a lot of specific
17 processes that have been -- have accreted over the years, and all of
18 them tend to be -- to make hearing processes expensive and burdensome
19 for a lot of people, including the public participants.

20 I think that the Commission is looking for a way to simplify
21 some of this, to make it more effective, and to possibly make it more
22 accessible, but looking for all of your suggestions about how to do
23 that, and if it turns out that part of the motivation is an anticipation
24 of a number of certain types of proceedings down the road, license
25 renewal proceedings, so be it, but I think the ultimate aim was to look
for a more efficient and effective process.

CAMERON: I guess what you're saying, Joe, is that the
implication behind Steve's point, I guess, on license renewal is that
the motivation is only to expedite things, and you're saying that
there's a broader -- from your perspective, and you're giving your

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1 opinion about the Commission's perspective -- is that there's a broader
2 --broader objectives at work here.

3 GRAY: Right.

4 CAMERON: Let's go to Jim, and then we'll go to Tony, and
5 then we will go down to Jill and back over this way.

6 Jim?

7 RICCIO: I would really have no problem in revisiting this
8 whole process if it wasn't my belief that we're basically going to
9 result in circumscribing the public's rights even further and that this
10 is just another series of attempts to circumscribe the public's rights.

11 You've already removed our right to a hearing
12 post-licensing. You're trying to close your meetings behind doors and
13 under the Sunshine Act, and I just wanted to pull out something back
14 from the early '80s, when I was still in college.

15 Peter Bradford said that the current NRC adjudicatory
16 process was developed as part of a bargain in which the nuclear power
17 industry gained a great deal in the late '50s.

18 In return for accepting extensive Federal hearings, the
19 industry was exempted from any state or local regulation of radiological
20 health and safety and received limitations on liability set forth in the
21 Price-Anderson Act.

22 Thus, citizens in any community where the nuclear facility
23 was located gave up both local regulation of the facility and additional
24 financial and safety assurances that normal insurance industry
25 operations would have brought.

In return, they got a commitment of a full panoply of
trial-type proceedings as part of the Federal licensing process.

Now that memories have faded, the industry is seeking to
revoke its share of the concessions in that original bargain.

And he went on to comment that, contrary to the popularly

1 held belief that the hearing process had prohibited a timely resolution
2 of issues, that -- there's a letter here from -- basically from former
3 Commissioner -- or Chairman Palladino saying that he has no evidence of
4 this holding up.

5 I know Jay has mentioned the LES, and I would suggest that
6 the industry avoid bringing up the Vogtle licensing transfer case,
7 because if anyone takes a good hard look at that, what they'll find is
8 that the reason that license transfer took so long is because a
9 whistle-blower who is a former executive at Southern challenged the
10 license transfer, and why?

11 Because his people had told him to lie about the reliability
12 of the emergency diesel generators.

13 I don't think that's a real strong case for you all to be
14 bringing up, because when you really look at it, it shows that -- a lack
15 of hearing process rights actually hurt the public and it came close to
16 melting down a reactor in Georgia.

17 Basically, this is all about knocking down the power lines
18 leading in to plant Vogtle.

19 But to say that we're here merely to, you know, reform a
20 process that doesn't work -- the public doesn't believe the process
21 works.

22 We're minimized and basically driven to, as Diane says, the
23 fringes of the process, and to think that we're going to come in here
24 and get a fair shake from this Commission -- I really think you have to
25 take a step back and ask yourselves, you know, what do you want?

Do you want to give us hearing rights, or do you want people
meeting you in the streets?

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I did a small survey, rather unscientific, of the people
that I work with. Their comments were you take away our hearing rights,
we will meet you in the street. Ask the Commissioners how they would

1 like a tent village on the White Flint green.

2 These are people who have used the process. These are
3 people who are currently using the process in dealing with
4 decommissioning and license transfers.

5 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Jim. You raised a couple of
6 important points, one of which I'm going to ask Larry to address, but
7 this is just sort of a courtesy point for you in terms of processes. I
8 think, for most of us, we don't need to be reminded that you were in
9 college in the 1980s.

10 RICCIO: Sorry, Chip.

11 CAMERON: Larry, Jim was, I think, expressing a view that --
12 Joe talked about a number of reasons why -- that there's a re-look going
13 on, and I think Jim evidenced some skepticism about the objectiveness of
14 the process, is there a particular result that is being looked at here.
15 Do you want to comment on that?

16 CHANDLER: I think I said earlier, sometime ago, that, in my
17 view, there is an interest in looking honestly at the broader question
18 of how a process -- how the current processes are working and whether
19 the current processes can and should be improved to result in a better
20 and more effective and efficient process to make decisions.

21 I don't share his cynicism for the process. I think, on the
22 contrary, it's worked reasonably well over the years.

23 It's had its high points and its low points, as any process
24 will, and we can identify cases -- I've been identified with cases that
25 I think have gone well and some which, candidly, have not gone
especially well in terms of anyone's -- from anyone's perspective.

I think, in, in part, response to some comment that Steve
ANN Kohn made a bit earlier, I think one of the things we need to do when we
RIL think about how the process works and whether how it could be improved,
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1 things the Commission does, the different kinds of actions the
2 Commission takes, the process doesn't really act in isolation.

3 The hearing procedures really need to be designed to achieve
4 certain points and objectives.

5 In the context of -- the historic context of reactor
6 licensing proceedings, for example, you have a series of findings that
7 are dictated in 10 CFR Part 50, and the question then becomes what kind
8 of processes are best used to enable those determinations to be made
9 when they are contested?

10 When you look at license transfers, as the Commission did
11 recently in promulgating sub-part M, questions were asked, given the
12 nature of the determinations that are needed in connection with license
13 transfers, what processes will work well in reaching those?

14 Likewise, in connection with license renewal, the Commission
15 determined the scope of findings needed to authorize issuance of a
16 renewed license. Those are in Part 54. And again, the question becomes
17 what processes, procedures are appropriate to making those kinds of
18 findings. And enforcement cases, likewise, and you can go through and
19 ask the same question.

20 I'm not suggesting that you need to have unique procedures
21 for each and every kind of finding and determination the Commission
22 needs. I'm just suggesting that it's an appropriate consideration as we
23 talk about any revisions to existing processes, and in fact, it
24 explains, in part, how some of these decisions were made over the years
25 and why these sub-parts have evolved the way they have.

CAMERON: Okay. Thanks.

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We're going to go to Tony and then to Jill, and I guess one
question -- one issue for people to think about is that, if there is
skepticism about where the Commission is headed in this -- with this
re-look, how do you dispel that skepticism?

1 Is it only results-oriented solution, or are there process,
2 including this process, that can help convince people of that?

3 Tony?

4 THOMPSON: The Commission engaged in a strategic assessment
5 re-baselining initiative under Chairman Jackson that looked at all of
6 its overall regulatory processes to determine what -- where they might
7 go in the future, what were the issues, what were important.

8 I see no reason why looking at a hearing process that has
9 been grafted together over 20 years or 30 years isn't an appropriate
10 part of such a process.

11 The uranium recovery industry determined that there were a
12 whole range of Commission policies or decisions or approaches to
13 regulating uranium recovery industries that had been cobbled together
14 over 20 years and presented a white paper to the Commission raising
15 these issues, suggesting that now is the time for a fresh look.

16 It seems to me that makes sense for any agency at some point
17 in time to consider whether what they're doing now can be improved.
18 Perhaps it can.

19 Skepticism goes two ways. I've been a part of a proceeding,
20 informal hearing proceeding for the lowest risk single type of process
21 in the nuclear fuel cycle that's involved 10,000 pages from intervenors,
22 most of it totally repetitious, interlocutory petitions for re-hearing,
23 voicing exactly the same thing as in the briefs, and that's an abuse of
24 the process from our perspective.

25 So, perhaps there is a need to look at all sides of these
issues, and I don't claim to be all knowing, but it seems to me it makes
perfectly good sense to take a look at things and see if there is a way
to perhaps not have so many different sub-parts, maybe wind up saying
that's what you're going to do. Maybe you keep them the way they are.
Maybe you tweak them. Maybe you don't change things fundamentally. I

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1 don't know. But it's certainly worth looking at.

2 CAMERON: Okay. I think that ties into what Jay was saying,
3 that it may be time for a re-look.

4 I know we're going to get some response to your second
5 point, which is a criticism of a particular proceeding and type of
6 proceeding, and I think what we're seeing develop is that, just as Jim
7 indicated a different view on the Vogtle license transfer, that there
8 may be a different view about what to some person is a defect and may
9 not be a defect to someone else.

10 Jill?

11 ZAMEK: I have a lot to say.

12 One is why are we second-guessing the Commissioners about
13 their motivation? One idea is it's for license renewals, and my idea
14 was the waste repository issue. Why are we making this change to make
15 it less formal right now?

16 I want to talk a little about my experiences, getting in as
17 a citizen into a license renewal case. It's already extremely difficult
18 to get in, with standing and contentions, and then we can't talk about
19 generic issues.

20 So, it's already -- your hands are tied from the start, and
21 I think we need to go more in a direction like -- I agree with Steve
22 Kohn. It's like we're going in the wrong direction and not less formal.

23 Although it simplified the process and allowed more people
24 to come in the process, I think that what's going to end up happening is
25 the process will be completely ineffective. That's my fear.

So, maybe we can allow more contentions in, maybe more
people can participate, but then it's going to just get flushed down the
toilet. Okay, we looked at that, we didn't find any basis, and throw it
away, and what's our recourse.

So, I don't think simplifying the process is the answer.

1 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Jill, and we're certainly going to
2 get to those substantive issues about whether simplifying the process is
3 the answer, and I guess, similar to Steve, you're thinking that there is
4 a particular proceeding that's a motivation or type of proceeding that's
5 a motivation for the hearing.

6 ZAMEK: Whether it is or it isn't isn't really the point.

7 CAMERON: Okay.

8 Mal, since Jill mentioned high-level waste proceeding, do
9 you want to go ahead, and then we'll move to Susan and then Steve, then
10 Mike.

11 MURPHY: Well, I wasn't going to say anything about the
12 high-level waste proceeding.

13 I will later, but I just would like to make the suggestion
14 that perhaps we're hung up -- and I, you know, sort of thought of this
15 when I was reading the SECY paper, and earlier than that, when the
16 Commission asked for comments on the formal versus informal hearing
17 process with respect to the proposed Part 63.

18 These, in a small sense, at least, are sort of buzz words,
19 and the word "informal" hearing really freaks people out in many
20 contexts, not just nuclear licensing but in the whole gamut of
21 regulatory hearings.

22 There's lots of members of the public who are
23 unsophisticated with respect to regulatory matters and who don't
24 participate in the regulatory process the way some representatives of
25 the public do who are just convinced that, when they hear the word an
"informal" hearing, that the result has been cooked, and in some cases,
history has proven them right, unfortunately, and not, again, with
respect to nuclear matters, but just as a suggestion, I would think we
might be better off for the next day-and-a-half talking more about how
do we reduce the complexity -- I don't like the word "simplification"

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1 either, but how do we reduce the complexity of the whole hearing
2 process, how do we move toward reaching these performance objectives,
3 and I guess, at some point in time, we have to talk about them
4 specifically, in a way which serves the interests of all the parties --
5 the public, the industry, you know, state and local governments, for my
6 case, etcetera -- rather than just saying, well, you know, shouldn't we
7 have some hearings as formal, some hearings as informal?

8 I don't think that's the real issue, and I think that word
9 "informal" with respect to complex, scientific, highly technical, highly
10 emotionally charged and controversial hearings is frequently
11 counterproductive in terms of public perception.

12 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks. And I think we may hear some more
13 about that when we hear Jeff Lubbers' presentation, but I think your
14 point is a good one in terms of trying to move towards the performance
15 objectives at some point.

16 Let's hear some more comments around the table. I think
17 that this is useful in terms of people getting out some basic thoughts
18 here.

19 Susan?

20 HIATT: I just wanted to respond to Jay's examples of cases
21 that didn't work and those that had a lot of delay involved in them.

22 I guess it all depends which side you're looking from.

23 From the perspective of the citizens being placed at risk by
24 the nuclear industry, for them, delay is a victory.

25 Every day the facility isn't operating is a day they're not
being placed at risk, and for them, it's a perfectly legitimate goal,
and I would just note that this agency, when it suits its own purposes,
has also seen delay as a legitimate strategy, the most recent example of
which was its decision on potassium iodide funding.

CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Susan.

1 Steve?

2 KOHN: Thank you, Chip.

3 I just want to say one thing initially. I just want to
4 thank Chip for doing this.

5 I was a little skeptical coming in, but I've really been
6 enjoying the discussion, I think, hearing from the different sides and
7 getting a real feel for this. I hope the whole day continues. I'm
8 finding it very stimulating and interesting.

9 I would like just to focus on a couple of the comments I
10 heard and hope to have a reasonable conclusion, but someone made a
11 comment that, over the last 20 years, there's been a lot of changes in
12 the rules and maybe it's time now to change the rules or look at
13 reformatting them because of, you know, all these different sub-parts
14 and make it administratively more efficient, and I just sit back and say
15 there's about 500 years, really, we're looking at in terms of how do you
16 get truth in a process, and as our forefathers knew when they fought for
17 the Magna Carta and other doctrines, the adversary system works.
18 Cross-examination works. Neutral judges with true independence work.

19 If parties, through consent, can agree upon some form of
20 alternative dispute resolution process, fine, but when push comes to
21 shove, when you have two very adversarial interests, the adversary
22 system, as it has been hammered out and achieved through a number of
23 revolutions and the historical process, works, and I think where we see
24 the tension here is certain efforts to take away those rights, such as
25 meaningful cross-examination that needs discovery, that doesn't have
judges do the cross-examination, that advocates do it, and I will say,
in the context of good science, without meaningful cross-examination,
you are living in a very dangerous situation.

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I've had the honor of representing scientists at the FBI and
I've had the honor of representing scientists at the EPA on all sides of

1 the spectrums, and one thing we have learned, that on questions of
2 science, without good cross-examination and discovery, you will have
3 tremendous problems.

4 Example in the FBI context, the World Trade Center or the
5 Oklahoma City bombings, where witnesses in World Trade took the stand
6 and were not subject to proper cross-examination, terrible science was
7 occurring. You need the time, you need the experts to deal with that,
8 and that's a fight they're having in EPA today about more openness in
9 the process in terms of good science.

10 So, we should not look at certain procedural rights that
11 have proven effective in the truth-seeking process. Those rights must
12 remain sacred, and we shouldn't confuse efficiency with taking away
13 cross examination. The two are in totally different ballparks.

14 Which brings me to the Vogtle case, which has been used as
15 an example. I've been told it's been used as an example on a number of
16 occasions. I've never been invited, on any occasion in which it's been
17 used as an example, to offer any form of rebuttal, but for the record,
18 I'll just offer it here.

19 I had the honor of representing that whistle-blower in the
20 Vogtle proceeding, and what happened there was just cross-examination at
21 work.

22 The proceeding which we thought would last a short period of
23 time went on for a long time, because anything we did but because the
24 company's witnesses were putting bad science on the stand.

25 We had an expert who could properly assist in
cross-examination and demonstrate material issues at that plant, root
cause problems, safety issues.

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So, that process worked.

What didn't work at Vogtle was the non-adjudicatory process,
the process in which the public had been pushed out, which caused the

1 adjudicatory process to go longer.

2 The staff delayed the investigation for years. They had the
3 information in '90. It took them three years to write a report. It
4 didn't take us three years to do a hearing.

5 Two level one violations were issued with no effect. Level
6 two violations were issued with no effect.

7 So, if you have a utility that is essentially immune from
8 being disciplined through the staff process, the only thing left is the
9 adjudicatory process. Believe me, no one wanted to be there. If the
10 staff process worked, we would have been out the door.

11 But again, cross-examination worked, and I could go into
12 that for a long time.

13 I want to now deal with an issue that I think has to come to
14 the table if this process is to work, and it's called trust.

15 Now, we may not, in some ways, trust each other, and if we
16 can't overcome that, it's an issue, but I'll tell you what some of the
17 trust buzz words are for me.

18 A discussion about less formal. The Commission clearly is
19 not interested in less formal, or they should at least explain the
20 contradictions.

21 An example: They've issued a policy statement that's in
22 effect now that you should only get enlargements of time in unavoidable
23 and extreme circumstances.

24 Less formal, to me, would mean that it might be easier to
25 get an enlargement of time, easier for parties to work together, try to
reach resolutions. Coming up with a standard of unavoidable and extreme
is actually increasing formality.

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Or the Commission's statement about board-admitted
contentions in which they now say you can only have a board-admitted
contention in an extraordinary circumstance, where the Commission went

1 in a rule-making proceeding 15 years ago and found that the
2 extraordinary circumstances standard was a threat to public health and
3 safety.

4 So, instead of going less formal, not only did they increase
5 formality, they increased formality using standards that threaten the
6 public health and safety, and then they went further, because then they
7 said, if the board has the guts -- and under this standard, I doubt many
8 will, but if the board has the guts to do a sua sponte contention, well,
9 it's subject to immediate interlocutory review.

10 So, when the Commission is saying, on the one hand, we want
11 less formal, but on the other hand, is mandating interlocutory review,
12 making enlargements impossible, uprooting standards that they themselves
13 thought were in the public interest, there is a trust issue here,
14 because you can't just get informal on the side of utilities.

15 If you're going to go informal, let's see something good
16 coming out of it.

17 This is purely -- it's a disconnect.

18 I also want to state that the underlying issue is -- someone
19 made a comment that, I think, 22 plants were now seeking license renewal
20 -- and there will be more, in time -- 22 plants seeking a 20-year
21 renewal is the equivalent of 11 new plants going on-line.

22 It is the radiological equivalent in terms of potential
23 exposures to the public, increasing radioactive waste, etcetera, of 11
24 new plants. That's what's really happening here, but with one major
25 distinction.

When the 22 plants were truly new, you had the right to a
formal adjudicatory process. That science could be tested through the
time-honored methods of cross-examination.

Now, you have the equivalent of 11 plants coming on-line,
but to use the word "new" is not correct, because they're not new.

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1 They're used cars.

2 So, what you're doing is you're taking -- essentially,
3 instead of these nice new machines, you're taking 11 used cars out there
4 and you're telling the public that whatever consumer protections existed
5 in buying a new car, we're going to gut them for selling you a used car.

6 To me, this is raising a lot of safety issues, but it goes
7 back to the trust, because what is really -- the issue is how to design
8 our procedures to sell these used cars and eliminate consumer
9 protection. Well, fine. Let's be open about it.

10 If the issue is really how to do a process that is fair, I
11 think we have to hear from the Commission, and my concern is the
12 guidance being given in this July 22nd memo. If this is what's guiding
13 these discussions, I don't know why we're having discussions, because
14 this is completely disconnect, and that's my concern.

15 So, to get to the trust issue, I would like to see if the
16 Commissioners themselves would be invited to come, at least maybe for
17 the second day of this session, give us some input, talk with us, and
18 let's see what their motives are, as opposed to us sitting here
19 speculating on blank pieces of paper.

20 So, for Chip, I would like to say my only recommendation is
21 can the Commissioners be here to hear this discussion and perhaps
22 participate?

23 CAMERON: Okay.

24 When you said "disconnect," you meant disconnect between
25 what you saw in the SRM and an objective evaluation of what needs to be
changed in the hearing process? I just wanted to clarify that.

KOHN: The disconnect is bringing in true public
participation and trying to get a just rule versus reviewing what the
Commission is saying, essentially our guidance on what we're doing here.

There's a major disconnect, which raises a trust issue.

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1 If this paper was issued, the July 22nd paper, after this
2 discussion, that's one thing, but to come down with this type of
3 explicit guidance before there's even the public participation, it just
4 raises a trust issue.

5 CAMERON: Okay. So, this is going back to the point Jim
6 made earlier, and I know that a lot of you have these concerns, and we
7 can only harken back, I guess, to Larry and Joe's comments this morning,
8 and we'll keep talking about that.

9 I don't know how successful we might be in bringing the
10 Commissioners down here, but I think that the NRC has to pay particular
11 attention to this problem about the SRM appearing to give some -- at
12 least some type of marching orders and openness to a lot of different
13 viewpoints here, but I think we're going to be back to that issue again.

14 Let's go Mike McGarry and then over to Tony, and we have
15 Ellen and Jim, and then I think we'll take a break and sort of reassess
16 where we are in terms of our next discussion, where we should start.

17 Mike?

18 McGARRY: I think the question we need to be focusing on --
19 is there a need for a change? Jay's given his thoughts, Larry's given
20 his thoughts, and there's been reaction.

21 To me, there's nothing inherently wrong from taking a step
22 back and looking at any issue. I serve on a number of charitable
23 citizen public sector and educational boards, and I'm sure many of us in
24 this room do the same thing.

25 We constantly are challenging ourselves. We have strategic
plans. We have five-year plans. The question at the top of our minds
is how can we do things better? I think that should be our focus here.

 We have a range of issues. Jim said, look, you've taken
& enough away from us already, no change. Diane says a need for a level
OCI playing field. Mal says less complex hearing. Steve says trust, and he
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1 said consideration should be given to both sides, the applicants and the
2 intervenors.

3 I think those are the types of issues we should focus on.
4 Let's look at the issue. Can the hearing process be made to be better?
5 I don't think the question is how can we make the process better. Can
6 it be made better?

7 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Mike, and I guess that use of the
8 word "better" brings us back to perhaps performance objectives.

9 In other words, what does "better" mean?

10 I mean there's a lot of different perspectives on that, and
11 I think someone -- I guess it was Mal -- talked about is there a way to
12 identify problems with the hearing process and related changes to fix
13 those problems with which a broad group of people might agree, or not
14 agree, necessarily, but would everybody be best served by trying to
15 pursue those changes, and let's just keep that in mind as we try to
16 fashion an agenda for discussion for later in the day.

17 Tony?

18 ROISMAN: It seems to me that there is a basic question that
19 we're still not really facing up to, and that is that -- I mean it's
20 obvious from the discussion there are diametrically opposed positions
21 and, in some ways, diametrically opposed goals.

22 There's some people in the room who want every nuclear
23 decision to be made fast and favorably and some who want it to never be
24 made and, if it's made, made negatively, and that's an unresolvable
25 problem.

The whole reason for all these processes is to allow those
two points of view to be expressed, heard, and someone independent to do
it.

Now, obviously, there is a question that has existed even
before this most recent version of the Commission, which is, is the

1 Nuclear Regulatory Commission made up of people who are really able to
2 be neutral?

3 They split the AEC at one time because there was a concern
4 about the promotion and regulation getting mixed together, and I'm not
5 telling you something you don't know or revealing something that is
6 shocking.

7 You know that the vast majority of the people who are not
8 favorable to nuclear power plants don't believe that they can get a fair
9 shake in front of the Commission, and they don't believe that because
10 they look at the records of the people who are Commissioners, they look
11 at the records of the people who are -- they're political appointees,
12 they're appointed by presidents and by congresses, who have different
13 agendas than the vast number of those people.

14 The hearing process, however, particularly its evolution
15 from the time that I started with the operating license for Indian Point
16 -- it's interesting. You can tell you're old when they start
17 decommissioning the plants that you were opposing getting licensed.

18 But the hearing boards have really become what I think the
19 bulk of the public always wanted the Commission to be but it really
20 never has become. They've become the place where you can go and have a
21 shot, have a fair shot at an independent group of people, and my
22 experience with the hearing boards and with the -- I'm sorry that the
23 appeal board is gone. I thought they fulfilled an enormously important
24 function, and if there are going to be as many licensing hearings as it
25 now appears there may be, for different reasons than the old operating
license construction permit decisions.

 I would hope that one of the things the Commission would
reconsider is re-instituting that, in part to take away the burden on
the Commissioners of having to decide so many detailed matters at their
level and, in part, because like the licensing board, the appeal board

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1 had developed a reputation and a perception -- I mean why would all of
2 these people -- it's kind of interesting that all these people are here.

3 Why do they want this hearing process made more complete,
4 more inclusive, more effective? Because basically there's that faith.

5 I remember a day -- I'll recount this one story, because I
6 think it's illustrative of an important point. After many years of
7 fighting in the Seabrook construction permit, there was a hearing before
8 the Atomic Safety and Licensing Appeal Board, and they held it in a
9 courthouse in Nashua, and the Clamshell Alliance had been very active at
10 that point and a very, very effective citizen group, I might say, a
11 model for sort of grassroots organizing, and they circled the
12 courthouse.

13 There were, I don't know, several thousand people around the
14 courthouse, and we were inside arguing, and when we came out, they were
15 completely around the courthouse, and there was sort of this concern
16 that maybe they were going to hold everybody captive, you know, the
17 Atomic Safety and Licensing Appeal Board and everybody else, and when
18 the Appeal Board members walked out, they opened a corridor for them,
19 and they all applauded, and they walked through, and there was that kind
20 of a faith, that kind of a confidence in the system.

21 So, I think that the question we should be asking ourselves
22 is really a question, all right, if there's a process there that people
23 have faith in -- and I think they do -- what is that process for, why is
24 it there, and I think that's the second place where there's a real
25 divergence here among the people who are talking.

I think the Commissioners believe, judging by what they've
written -- I know the General Counsel believes, judging by what she has
written, and I suspect that many of the people at the table who are in
the nuclear industry side of it believe that the purpose of the
licensing process in terms of public participation is to let the public

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1 get its say and then get on with the business of nuclear power, that
2 that is the function of it, that the public really doesn't have that
3 much to substantively contribute to the process.

4 That's evident from Jay's listing of the plants that he
5 considers to be the failures, and it's sort of an -- I'm glad you
6 asked him to list those, since two of those are cases in which I was
7 intimately involved.

8 I think, in some ways, that I would agree with him that
9 Seabrook was a failure, but we would agree for entirely different
10 reasons. There's a plant that should have never gotten a license. It
11 bankrupted the utility. It's in the process of bankrupting the state
12 that I now live in, and it was a plant that was never needed and should
13 have never been built.

14 But the point is we don't have the same view about what's a
15 success and what's a failure. That's really important.

16 But that's because the premises between the utility on the
17 one hand and the vendor and the regulatory staff on the other -- all the
18 possible legitimate issues that could be explored have been explored,
19 and all the possible legitimate facts that could be developed have been
20 developed, and therefore, there's really nothing left for the public to
21 do.

22 It's really a carryover of the early, early days that people
23 -- I don't know whether there's anybody here that -- even I was not
24 around at the time when the Commission used to hold essentially a dog
25 and pony show. They would hold a construction permit or operating
license hearing.

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The public participation consisted of people standing up and
making a little speech during that process that I think has now long
since gone of just -- you weren't even on the record, and questions
would get raised from the floor by people, and then someone from the

1 staff or someone from the utility would, in a very patronizing sort of
2 way, pat you on the head and say, well, you don't understand, these
3 nuclear power plants really can't blow up, because we're using -- we're
4 not using that highly enriched uranium and we've got all of these safety
5 -- and so forth, and that still sort of exists in the process. That's
6 still kind of there.

7 Now, I think that, if a real study was done -- and that's --
8 sort of my first principle point is that I think that this whole thing
9 is happening before anybody has done basic scientific research
10 necessary.

11 I was surprised, when I finally got around to reading this
12 material, that there has been no study done of the licensing process to
13 determine, based on real cases, not anecdotes, actual case study, how
14 many cases work, how many didn't, why they did work, or why they didn't
15 work, and what did it mean to say that it worked.

16 What would I put as the top list -- top of my list of the
17 biggest failure? TMI.

18 How in the world did that plant get through this
19 complicated, thorough licensing process with such a group of incompetent
20 people operating it that they could not deal with an emergency situation
21 when it arose and we nearly had the worst nuclear accident ever? How
22 did that happen? What went wrong?

23 That's the kind of question, because that's the only issue
24 that we really all agree on. Nobody wants a Three Mile Island. No one
25 wants anything close to a Three Mile Island.

Nobody wants to find out that a plant like Comanche Peak was
being built by a bunch of people who had so intimidated the safety
inspectors at the plant that the safety inspectors were afraid to put
the safety word out. No one wants that to happen.

There was nobody on the side of the utility or the staff

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1 that wanted that, but it happened, and so, the test of the licensing
2 process should be what I think is listed as item five among the five
3 objectives, substantive soundness. Did you get a good result?

4 When you see a plant like Shoreham taken all the way to
5 initial critical testing and then canceled, you have to wonder, where
6 was the failure?

7 Was it in the citizens who said you shouldn't license it at
8 all and you would have saved all that money and time and effort, or was
9 it in the utility that said you've got to have this thing licensed and
10 then, in the end, realized that they couldn't.

11 Now, you may object and say, well, but the reasons were
12 political or economic and they weren't legitimately safety issues, but
13 they're all political and economic. It all gets down to that.

14 Henry Kendall used to point out, much to the chagrin of
15 Ralph Nader, that he was not anti-nuclear. He knew you could build and
16 operate a plant safely, but you couldn't do it economically.

17 The reason the nuclear industry didn't want to have Hyman
18 Rickover as the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission was
19 obviously not because he was not pro-nuclear and it certainly wasn't
20 because he didn't know the subject.

21 It was that, if he imposed on the private nuclear industry
22 in this country the standards that he imposed on the nuclear Navy, very,
23 very few utilities, if any, would ever be able to pass muster, and
24 General Electric wouldn't be able to sell a nuclear power plant because
25 it couldn't and wouldn't get itself down to the zero release for its
nuclear fuels in boiling water reactors.

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So, I wouldn't try, at this stage, and I wouldn't try on
this day and I wouldn't try even in this year -- and I guess we can say
in this century or this millennium -- to change this licensing process
before somebody answers the question, what was right, what was wrong,

1 and what failed in the system, really get a good fix on what the problem
2 is, and secondly, to recognize that, unless there is some sort of a sea
3 change, it is a safety reason to have citizen opponents to nuclear
4 power, and it doesn't matter -- I don't think -- and I disagree with
5 Steve about this -- I don't think there's an issue here about the
6 intentions of the Commissioners.

7 I don't think that's relevant anymore than there is an issue
8 about the intentions of Judy Jonsrud, who has been opposing nuclear
9 power plants since before most of the people at this table were born,
10 almost.

11 JONSRUD: I beg your pardon.

12 [Laughter.]

13 ROISMAN: My point is this is not about a question of
14 motives or intentions. It's about outcomes.

15 I can't imagine anything that would be more useful to a
16 genuinely concerned Nuclear Regulatory Commission and a nuclear industry
17 than to have a group of people who were so opposed to what they want to
18 do that they would go out of their way to find every possible flaw and
19 defect in the proposal.

20 The last place you want to find those flaws is like they did
21 at TMI, after the plant is running. You want to find them in advance.

22 So, I think that it's a deeper question and we should look
23 at it from the perspective of what do you want to get out of it, and I
24 think what you want to get out of it is this -- a process in which, to
25 the largest extent possible, you want to have the right result.

Now, lastly, is that inconsistent with a process which is --
and by the way, everybody at this table agrees, it should be fair,
efficient, and effective, and I don't think it's inconsistent at all,
& I would candidly say I think that you can do it with, quote,
"streamlined processes," I think you can do it with tight deadlines, but

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1 you cannot do it without the one thing that no one at this table except
2 the people who are representatives of citizen groups would insist on.

3 You cannot do it if you do not fund the opposition.

4 If you look at what goes on in the licensing process, why is
5 it -- why did we fight so hard to have cross-examination rights?

6 Because we couldn't afford depositions.

7 When we had cross-examination rights, you put the people on
8 the witness stand, you gave us the microphone, and someone transcribed
9 the record, and you had to put the record into the public document room.
10 We didn't have to buy a transcript. We couldn't afford to take
11 depositions.

12 Do you think that we wanted to spend months, years in
13 God-forsaken places like Ossining, New York? None of us wanted to do
14 that. And Glen Rose, Texas.

15 [Laughter.]

16 ROISMAN: But seriously, I think that, if the Commission
17 wants to make the process work, then it's going to -- in a more
18 efficient way, if it wants things to move more quickly, then it has to
19 provide the people who are going to have the input with the resources to
20 play the game as fast as you want the game played.

21 If you don't, then the citizens are going to say I can't run
22 this fast, and that's what Diane was talking about. You keep -- you
23 raise the bar higher, and you make it harder for anybody to participate
24 unless they are well-financed, and then you say to them, we made it
25 fair, all you had to do was get your contentions in in 10 days, or
whatever, and the advantage of that is that, to the extent that funding
is done, it's done in a way which assures that you do not have to rely
upon either no expertise or donated expertise, can really go out and
find the people -- and you don't have to rely on secondary issues.

I discovered that the secondary issues are the easiest to

1 understand, and I won't confess to you how many times I raised secondary
2 issues because I couldn't understand the primary issues, but I will tell
3 you it happens a lot, but if I had had an expert, a nuclear engineer,
4 who would have said to me, hey, the real problem is this issue, this is
5 the thing you should be concerned about, and was then prepared to give
6 me testimony to that effect, I would have needed much less time and the
7 process would have moved more smoothly.

8 Now, the outcome might have been either a denied license or
9 a markedly changed license, but that would have served the interest, I
10 think, of the process.

11 CAMERON: Tony, thank you for all of that, and what I'd like
12 to do is see if we can get the cards at the table and take a break, and
13 I do want to hear from the public, okay, before we go on to our next
14 discussion area, and we'll probably do that after the break, but maybe
15 we'll do it before.

16 But what I would like people to think about is what -- Tony
17 raised a number of points, and one of them is a -- it appears to me --
18 fairly neutral process point, and it goes to some of the issues that we
19 were -- a lot of other people raised, is a thorough evaluation of real
20 cases in terms of what worked, what didn't work before proceeding with
21 any rule-making on this effort.

22 Now, Tony cited performance objective number five, the
23 substantive soundness, sort of the litmus test of whether something --
24 whether a particular case worked or didn't work. I'm not sure -- I
25 don't know if people agree with that or not.

Then, I think, Tony, you talked about citizen participation
is a key to perhaps testing substantive soundness, but now it sort of
happens in a haphazard way because of resource limitations, and I know
there's people around the table who have been talking about this for
years in terms of there must be a more systematic way to test this out.

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1 Is that a fair summary?

2 ROISMAN: Yes.

3 CAMERON: All right.

4 I think we need to revisit some of these issues in our
5 discussion, and I do want to get you to a break. So, let's go to Ellen,
6 Jim, finish up with Bob, and then we'll see if we can -- I think Judy
7 and perhaps some others might want to say something.

8 Ellen.

9 GINSBERG: There's been a lot of discussion this morning
10 about the motivation of the industry, of the NRC, etcetera. Tony
11 touched on it. Others at the table have touched on it. And I really
12 think that that misses the mark in terms of focus.

13 I think you're not going to get to a better process,
14 whatever the form of that process is, until you focus on or look at the
15 objective of the process.

16 Let me just give you an example of what I'm talking about.

17 We sat down with some other folks in the industry in
18 anticipation of this meeting and tried to craft what we believed might
19 be a reasonable, if you will, mission statement or objective of the
20 hearing process, and I will provide it to you for your consideration.

21 What we came up with was that the objective of the NRC's
22 hearing process should be to provide a fair opportunity for interested
23 members of the public to raise well-defined issues that are within the
24 scope of review and for the NRC to efficiently reach a legally and
25 technically supportable, substantive conclusion.

It goes directly to Tony's point about, really, what we're
after here is the right, if you will, or a solid decision at the end of
the process. I think that's extremely important and something that we
shouldn't lose sight of.

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You've got a whole host of performance objectives, but if

1 you don't know what the objective of the process is, it's very hard to
2 create criteria for whether that process did or did not meet its
3 objective.

4 The other thing is that I think it's important -- and Susan
5 mentioned that they view as a victory delaying the process.

6 I think it's important to recognize that there are different
7 agendas. Tony put his finger on it when he said, you know, there are
8 polar extremes, if you will, in view about what the definition of
9 victory is, if you will, and I think that's important to recognize,
10 because I think to craft a process, at least knowing that our view would
11 be that that is not an objective that's sustainable, is important.

12 Your view obviously differs, but I think it's important to
13 get that on the table.

14 In addition, Steve talked about the adversary features of
15 the, if you will, formal hearing process, and I think it's important to
16 dispense with these categories of hearing processes, formal or informal,
17 because this doesn't fit readily into formal adjudication in the sense
18 of a courtroom proceeding.

19 You don't use Federal Rules of Evidence, or at least you
20 don't adhere to them rigidly, and so, I think if we talk about it as a
21 hearing process, it is more productive, and Mal had stated that earlier.

22 I think you can retain some of the features that we
23 currently have.

24 I think you can dispense with some of the features that we
25 currently have and still allow the public to participate, to get its
issues on the table, put them before a Federal agency that's going to
evaluate them, and have them resolved.

Our view is that some of that can be done on the papers far
more than it is done now, but it is not a monolithic issue, it is a
process that bears evaluation and that you can look at a whole host of

1 combinations and come up with a better process.

2 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Ellen.

3 What I'd like you to do during the break is if you could
4 give me your statement of the objectives of the hearing process, which I
5 think wrapped -- pretty much wrapped all of those five objectives that
6 were discreetly identified by the staff.

7 I think it wrapped up most of that. So, I'll write that on
8 a flip-chart for us, and perhaps we'll get back to discussing that.

9 Jim, you've been waiting patiently for a while.

10 RICCIO: I'd just like to toss this out to everyone around
11 the table.

12 Why would you give up your rights to cross-examination and
13 discovery? Would you do that on behalf of your industry? I doubt it.

14 But you're asking the public to basically take a back seat
15 and basically to remove this title formal/informal -- I think there are
16 substantive things that are going on there.

17 When you remove our rights from being formal to informal,
18 you take away discovery and cross-examination, and I see no reason to
19 give those up.

20 I enjoyed Tony's dissertation, and it raised issues of
21 public confidence. That's supposedly one of the agency's cornerstones.
22 I don't see that circumscribing the public's rights is going to enhance
23 public confidence in the agency, industry, or the process.

24 Maybe you can address those after the break. Would you give
25 up your rights to cross-examination?

CAMERON: I think -- I don't know when we'll exactly get to
that issue, but I think that the context that people might put that
question in is not would you give up your rights to discovery or cross
examination, but are there any areas in this whole hearing domain where
cross-examination or discovery is perhaps not needed? There needs to be

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1 a context put around it, but I think we need to have that discussion. I
2 mean if it does come down to that sort of bald statement, then I think
3 that's revealing of a lot of things.

4 Bob, do you want to wrap up the table discussion for us,
5 please?

6 BACKUS: Sure.

7 [Laughter.]

8 BACKUS: First of all, Tony, you are showing your age. It
9 wasn't Nashua, it was Manchester. And it wasn't the Appeal Board, it
10 was the Commission, and I know that because I'm researching my book,
11 which is totally historically accurate, I assure you.

12 Just a couple of things.

13 First of all, I think there is a possibility of a grand
14 bargain between the sides here, and it would involve some of the things
15 Tony said, some of the things Steve said, some of the things Jim said.

16 I think we'd be well willing, speaking for public interest
17 advocates, to see the process expedited to a quicker decision, so we
18 don't have seven years, and the quid pro quo would have to be do we have
19 a reasonable chance to prevail, a reasonable chance to prevail?

20 That would require that intervenors be given financial
21 support to make a case in a timely manner. It would require that we
22 stop playing these games with the contentions issue, which the
23 contentions have become almost the trial now. To get an admissible
24 contention, you almost have to prove your case just to get in the door.

25 If we could make that agreement, that the Commission will --
and we'd have to see evidence of this -- I don't know how it would be --
be capable of making a decision to turn down a license in a major case
-- and I acknowledge Diane Curran for her skill in doing it in the one
& case I can think of -- then I think you'd find us much more willing to
participate in expediting the process.

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1 If this was an EPA gathering, I suspect the industry would
2 be arguing against any informality in the procedures, because that
3 agency does not have the cache of being as allied with the industry as
4 the NRC does. I think we'd be taking different positions on this.

5 In looking through the materials that were provided, I went
6 through the other agencies, and I noticed that the EPA is very much
7 continuing with pretty formal procedures in its decision-making, and
8 apparently there's not much effort there to change that. It's here that
9 that's happening.

10 So, we get very suspicious about that.

11 Another thing that I think needs to be dealt with and the
12 reason for a lot of citizen unhappiness is we don't ever get to raise
13 the issues that really concern citizens in a major manner.

14 Like, for many citizens, a major issue is nuclear waste. We
15 never get to raise that in licensing issues. That's all handled
16 generically in some way. One time Tony succeeded in having that generic
17 method invalidated by the D.C. Court of Appeals, until the Supreme Court
18 got ahold of it, in the NRDC and Vermont Yankee case, but that's
19 something that's got to be looked at.

20 And the last thing I'll say -- and we can all go out and get
21 our coffee -- is that Jim is absolutely right. This is of vital
22 importance, because this is a democracy. And if this doesn't happen,
23 not only will we see people marching, we already have.

24 The Seabrook case is a perfect example. I represented an
25 organization called the Sea Coast Anti-Pollution League. The president
of that organization was a fellow named Guy Chichester.

 He was just profiled in the Concord Monitor as one of the
ANN 100 people who changed New Hampshire, which I kind of objected to, but
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 Mr. Chichester would go to the licensing hearings and see me

1 march in -- and I was almost never there when Tony was, because we
2 couldn't afford to be there on the same day. It was very rare that two
3 intervenor lawyers would be there.

4 He'd come in and he'd see me and he'd see three Robeson Gray
5 lawyers representing the applicant, three staff lawyers, and they were
6 all in favor of the license, and then he'd see me, and he told me this
7 to my face, says my little lawyer -- I was thinner back then -- my
8 little lawyer's getting creamed in there, and he went out and formed the
9 Clamshell Alliance.

10 So, you know, it is a democracy, and it's not going to be --
11 people are not going to give up their democratic rights, and they should
12 be preserved in the hearing process, and it's got to be a meaningful
13 process where the outcome is not always seen as fore-ordained, which is
14 the problem we have now.

15 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Bob, and maybe one of the values
16 of this discussion, I think, has been to perhaps illuminate a couple of
17 paths forward for discussion during the rest of the day.

18 Tony was -- had suggested perhaps a process solution that
19 should be -- we should explore.

20 Bob's grand bargain streamline -- I read that as, well,
21 there are certain fixes that all of you who have participated in these
22 processes might agree to, regardless of what the motivation, agenda,
23 etcetera, etcetera, is.

24 So, perhaps it's possible to identify those, but the second
25 part of the equation was also one that Tony brought up, which is the
reasonable chance to prevail, what needs to be done on that account, and
I mean you people here have the power, this group, to at least shape
your own agenda and discussion for the rest of the day.

We have to see how that then goes in as grist for the mill
for the Office of General Counsel and the Commission, but certainly, if

1 you think, as a group, there's some productivity to exploring certain
2 issues, we can do that.

3 So, it's something to think about during the break.

4 Let's see if we can just get some people who might want to
5 talk now quickly before we break.

6 Judy, do you want to say something?

7 JONSRUD: Yes. Thank you, Chip.

8 I have worked with a number of the people at the table.

9 I concur with the comments from Diane and from Steve, very
10 strong comments, so Jim, Bob, and Tony, and there are a lot of things
11 I'd like to say, but I am a firm adherent to the importance of the
12 Federal Administrative Procedure Act.

13 Going back a number of years, the NRC began -- well, in its
14 recent history, began to relax control in a very serious manner by its
15 change in its regulatory philosophy, and I think that that is to the
16 detriment of public safety.

17 Now, to attempt to bypass or eliminate the provisions that
18 give access to the judicial system of the United States is outrageous
19 beyond words.

20 The Commission, in my opinion, should abandon any efforts to
21 relax those provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act. They're
22 vital.

23 Tony mentioned TMI, and if I may, I was the pro se litigant
24 in the TMI-2 operating license. We did it with no funding whatsoever.
25 We did it with no technical or legal assistance.

We call it, you will forgive me, kangaroo attorneys in the
kangaroo court, and I'm afraid that that sums up precisely the nature of
the proceedings that we, from the citizen's perspective, have had to
& endure all these years.

In the TMI proceedings, we were denied opportunity to

1 question accidents whose consequences might be more severe than the
2 safety systems were designed to withstand. On what basis? That the
3 Commission's staff nuclear engineers were assured that these were highly
4 improbable events and, therefore, they needn't even be considered.

5 We were not permitted to question the regulations of the
6 Commission, although my colleague, Dr. Kepford, was able to do so in a
7 manner that subsequently was concurred with by a member of the Appeal
8 Board and was taken further in the courts.

9 It didn't stop the issuance of the license nor the accident
10 that resulted.

11 I think that we have, in the TMI-2 experience, the real
12 proof of this very unsavory pudding that has been the NRC's hearing
13 procedure, and I would call your attention, going clear back, of course,
14 to the declaration at the beginning of the Atomic Energy Act, which,
15 very frankly, gives the license to the Commission to promote, to
16 continue to promote and develop to the maximum extent the commercial as
17 well as military nuclear industry, but in this case the commercial.

18 One other very quick point.

19 It has distressed me for a very long period of time that the
20 decisions concerning human health and safety, not to mention all other
21 components of the bio-system, are made primarily in this agency by
22 nuclear engineers.

23 These are people who are not trained, who are not competent
24 in the fields of biology, ecology, medicine, genetics, the issues that
25 count with respect to health and safety of the public and the
environment.

I strongly concur with the recommendations that you're
hearing from the attorneys who have worked their hearts out for the
protection of the public's interest.

I have very little hope that the Commission will adopt those

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1 recommendations, but if you do so -- that is, if you fail to adopt these
2 positive recommendations -- you do serious further damage to the
3 American political and judicial system.

4 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Judy.

5 You made a number of points, but the one thing that sort of
6 comes out to me as a facilitator is that, you know, harkening back to
7 some of the comments from Mike now, Bob, Tony, others around the table,
8 would be it would be interesting to see if, at least for this group's
9 discussion, if perhaps there is a way to discuss what could be fixed,
10 and of course, there's a lot submerged there, but what could be fixed
11 with the existing hearing process and perhaps get away from the industry
12 versus the citizen perspective, in a way.

13 I don't know if we can get to a discussion like that, but it
14 might be informative and interesting.

15 Does anybody have any other comments out here before we take
16 a break?

17 Yes, sir, and if you could just give your name and
18 affiliation, if appropriate, for the transcript?

19 ZANNONI: My name is Dennis Zannoni. I'm here from the
20 State of New Jersey, work in the Department of Environmental Protection.
21 Actually, I'm here on other business, but my management asked me to
22 attend, because they're very interested in this discussion.

23 Whatever the outcome of this discussion would be, what's
24 taken place already, will be helpful in the way we manage processes
25 within the State, and so it's good to see the consistency that's
developing or the direction that's developing in the Federal Government
approach to these types of issues and also on the state level, because
it's difficult, at times, to have processes in a state setting that
people have a certain viewpoint of, and in fact, nuclear power plants
that -- we have four in New Jersey, and they're going through separate

1 processes, so it just helps in the alignment. So, I'm glad that I
2 attended here this morning.

3 I only have two brief comments, because I know folks want a
4 break, and that is, when we reviewed the SECY paper, I think it was
5 imperative -- and already mentioned a few times and I just want to
6 reiterate it -- the need for a study to determine what some of the root
7 causes were, and I don't think you can fix anything till you really
8 understand what the current existing problems are, and the second point
9 is it does come to a discussion about process.

10 What we found very helpful was when some of these hearings,
11 whether formal or informal, can actually take place in the vicinity of
12 the location of the problem. We felt that that definitely, more than
13 anything, outweighs -- well, builds the public confidence that we've
14 seen lacking in this area for some time, and the other thing is it would
15 be helpful to have a discussion about risk-informing the public hearing
16 process.

17 The NRC as an agency, I think, has taken a bold step in
18 doing that.

19 You have a pilot program to help risk-inform the way they
20 inspect and overview nuclear power plants, and you can be one side or
21 the other, but if you accept that as a mechanism to try to glean out
22 some of the issues that are raised, there may be disagreement, but we're
23 finding out in our state that it's becoming more and more helpful to try
24 to eliminate unnecessary issues that are brought to the table.

25 So, that's what I'd like to add, and thanks for meeting
today.

I'd like to thank the NRC for having this type of
discussion, because we find it very helpful.

CAMERON: Thanks a lot, Bob, and thank you for being here.

It's great that the State showed that interest in having you

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1 here, and in terms of risk-informing, the closest that I think that we
2 have gotten to that is perhaps Tony Roisman's point about substantive
3 soundness being the litmus test that we might be looking for here.

4 Maybe that is risk-informing the process, and Murphy, do you
5 want to get on the record here?

6 MURPHY: We had a roundtable discussion in Las Vegas just a
7 week-and-a-half ago in front of the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste
8 on that very subject, risk-informing the hearing process specifically in
9 the repository context, but I think the Commission has already -- or at
10 least an advisory committee to the Commission is already taking a deep
11 look at that.

12 CAMERON: Thank you, Mal.

13 Let's take a break till about quarter after. That gives you
14 about 25 minutes, and Jeff Lubbers has been kind enough to offer to do
15 sort of a summary of emerging trends, and I think that that will not get
16 us off-track in terms of miring us down into informal or formal but
17 perhaps give us a springboard from which to proceed on that.

18 So, we'll figure out what we're doing when we come back.

19 [Recess.]

20 CAMERON: I think that was a real good starting off session
21 on this subject. So, I'm going to ask you to all go home.

22 Seriously, we want to -- we are going to have Jeff Lubbers,
23 who's a professor of law at Washington College of Law at American
24 University, talk to us about some emerging trends, and we'll talk to
25 Jeff about his presentation, but based on the discussion this morning,
what I would suggest is that I think we need to deal with this objective
issue, and I have written down the objective that Ellen Ginsberg read
earlier, and we may not agree with all of it, we may want to fine-tune
& this, but I think at least we need to do something on the objective of
ASS the hearing process, okay? And I'm going to come back to this in a
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1 minute, and I see that some of you cannot see it and probably can't read
2 my writing.

3 BACKUS: Well, Tony has senior moments on memory. I have
4 senior moments on vision. I can't see that far.

5 CAMERON: After the objective and before we start to get
6 into the two parts of the so-called grand bargain equation, what fixes
7 would we -- might we agree on or might we want to discuss, and that
8 second part of the equation, which is the resources -- the resources is
9 an underlying theme, but a systematic, well-prepared examination from
10 the public's point of view of these issues -- we'll get to that, but
11 there were a lot of concerns expressed around the table -- delay,
12 etcetera, etcetera -- about the hearing process or changes to the
13 hearing process, and I thought it might be useful to identify those
14 concerns, and I'm using concerns rather than positions, okay?

15 In talking with Judge Heifetz during the break, from his
16 experience, he was pointing out that, if you have a handle on what the
17 concerns are, then perhaps we can start to work to address those
18 concerns, and I think that's all part of examining the grand bargain,
19 but at any rate, that's going to be after Jeff Lubbers.

20 Does anybody have any comment on that sort of broad way of
21 proceeding at this point?

22 [No response.]

23 CAMERON: Okay.

24 Well, let's go to Jeff for a presentation.

25 Thank you, Jeff, too, for being here.

LUBBERS: Thanks, Chip.

I thought I'd speak from here, since it might lend me a
little more authority, and I think I need it in this group.

I want to thank Chip for inviting me to this roundtable.

In my role at the Administrative Conference, I heard a lot

1 about the NRC from NRC alumni such as Bill Olmsted and Max Pagland, who
2 unfortunately are no longer with us, and from Gary Ettles, who's
3 teaching in England now, and I'm sure they could have contributed a lot
4 to this discussion, as well.

5 I sort of have a little trepidation about speaking to this
6 group, because I feel like, given the expertise in this room, I'm about
7 to describe the basic recipe for French toast to the Academy of Cuisine
8 of Paris, France, but I also want to start off with a few reactions to
9 what I've heard in the opening discussion, which I thought was very
10 interesting, very illuminating, and there were certainly some points
11 that I think we did reach some potential common ground.

12 I think, with respect to the objective there, I think that
13 we mentioned fairness, efficiency, effectiveness, and I think
14 acceptability has to be added in there at some point, because that's --
15 perceptions of those things matter a lot in this field.

16 I also wanted to react a little bit to the comment that
17 delay, in and of itself, might be an acceptable strategy or good in this
18 area, and I'm reminded a little bit about how this delay issue plays out
19 in other arenas.

20 You know, the so-called regulatory reform bills that have
21 been pending in Congress for the past several congresses have been
22 opposed by some of the very same public interest groups that are
23 represented in this room today, like Public Citizen, because they would
24 increase the delays and the ossification of rule-making, and you know,
25 I've heard the regulatory reform bills the Regulatory Sand in the Gears
Act of 1999, and so, that's something that I, as an administrative
procedure person, don't really like as a goal in and of itself.

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I also agree with the comment that the Administrative
Procedure Act is a sound law, and after all, it stood the test of time
pretty well for the last 50 years, and I think it should be generally

1 followed by Federal agencies in their adjudicative and rule-making
2 processes, but we also have to remember that the APA does have a lot of
3 built-in flexibility within it.

4 I agree with Tony Roisman's comments, and it was a real
5 pleasure hearing him give his talk, because I remember back in those
6 days when he was a very effective advocate, and I can see why now,
7 again, but I agree with his comment that we may need a study of some of
8 these issues, and unfortunately, the Administrative Conference isn't
9 around to do the study, but I think that we need to know more about
10 where the time lapses take place in these proceedings.

11 Are they in the pre-hearing stage, are they in the hearing
12 stage, are they in the post-hearing stage? And why do they take place
13 when they do?

14 I also agree with the general comment that it's probably a
15 good idea to review where we are in the agency's Code of Federal
16 Regulations.

17 I'm surprised that reinventing Government initiative hasn't
18 forced you to cut the pages of your CFR already, but I think that it is
19 sort of a question for someone like me, who's not steeped in the
20 substance of the nuclear power field, to wonder why does the Commission
21 need so many different types of modified procedure?

22 I think we all agree that enforcement cases should be done
23 through formal, APA-style adjudication, sub-part G. I don't think
24 there's any disagreement with that. At least I haven't heard any. And
25 I think that most people here would agree that some type of decisions
made by the NRC do not need full-fledged formal APA adjudication.

Some sort of modified procedure, if we can use that term, is
a good idea in some types of decisions that the NRC makes.

So, if we can sort of take that as a broad area of something
to talk about in the rest of the meeting, I think that might be helpful.

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1 I also certainly agree with the idea that intervenor funding
2 is something that should be pursued. I mean I thought that was a
3 tragedy back in the '70s when those programs, not just at the NRC but
4 some of the other agencies, were eliminated by Congress.

5 In the break, I was talking with Roland Frye about the fact
6 that the food and drug industry has happily paid for the FDA's -- or
7 added supplements to the FDA's budget so that the FDA could staff up to
8 handle new drug applications, and I know the industry essentially funds
9 the NRC, and I'm not sure how it works with respect to the
10 appropriations process in Congress and then some figure is arrived at
11 and then the industry essentially pays user fees to the NRC, but I would
12 hope that there would be some way that some little increment could be
13 added, like we see in our phone bills, to this NRC budget so that a fund
14 could be established for intervenor funding.

15 So, those are just some ideas that the discussion generated
16 in my own mind, as we discussed this morning, but my basic task that
17 Chip asked me to do today was to provide sort of an overview for the
18 rest of the meeting, what are the legal parameters for today's
19 discussion, what does the APA require in terms of adjudication, and what
20 are the emerging trends?

21 I think the written materials do a good job of providing
22 some good information, an overview of many of these issues. So, if
23 you've read those, this just might be a refresher for some of you.

24 But under the APA, agency adjudication is either formal or
25 informal. That's the way the APA is set up.

When we talk about formal adjudication, sometimes called APA
adjudication, we're talking about adjudication that is required and
controlled by the procedures in sections 554, 556, and 557 of the
Administrative Procedure Act.

Anything else has come to be known as informal adjudication,

1 and there is no section in the APA called informal adjudication.

2 The only section that bears on that is section 555, which is
3 called ancillary proceedings, and there's not much in that.

4 Of course, the due process clause applies to informal
5 adjudication.

6 Now, just a little bit of background.

7 When you teach administrative law, you often start with the
8 due process cases, because that sort of forms the backdrop for
9 administrative adjudication and the distinction between adjudication and
10 rule-making which is at the heart of the APA.

11 If the issues in a dispute involving the government involve
12 questions of general applicability, like whether your jurisdiction's
13 property tax rate should be raised 5 percent across the board, you as a
14 homeowner do not have a right to a trial-type adjudication on that
15 issue. There are no facts that are specific to you with respect to
16 that, and this is the famous *Buy Metallic* case from the early -- first
17 part of this century, and these types of decisions are usually those
18 that are made by legislation. A citizen doesn't have a right to a
19 hearing before Congress passes a law.

20 Of course, Congress can have hearings, but no constitutional
21 right to a hearing, and the analog to that in the administrative context
22 is rule-making. There's no right to an oral hearing in the APA for
23 rule-making. There's no constitutional right to a oral hearing with
24 cross-examination, etcetera, in a rule-making situation.

25 But if you have a dispute that involves property or liberty
that's individual to you -- like if you disagree with the assessment of
your own individual property, yours was raised -- your assessment was
raised 10 percent, your neighbor's was not, you have a right to a
hearing on that point.

This is the *Londoner vs. Denver* case, the other early due

1 process case.

2 Now, these are all cases involving, you know, real property,
3 and if your interest was affected on an individualized basis, you had a
4 right to a hearing. Back then, a hearing meant a trial, essentially,
5 trial-type hearing, similar to courtroom trials.

6 Now, the high water mark with respect to due process
7 procedure in administrative hearings was the Goldberg vs. Kelly case.

8 Now, I put in your materials the 10 procedural ingredients
9 of Goldberg vs. Kelly, and there's no secret here. I mean notice,
10 confrontation of adverse witnesses, oral presentation of arguments.

11 If you all don't have my sheet, I'll go through them --
12 opportunity for cross-examination of adverse witnesses, right to retain
13 counsel, disclosure of opposing evidence, decision on the record of the
14 hearing, statement of reasons and evidence relied on, and impartial
15 decision-maker.

16 It's pretty much what you have in a courtroom trial,
17 although you don't have a judge -- a judge wasn't actually required by
18 Goldberg vs. Kelly, merely an impartial decision-maker, but it's pretty
19 close to a trial, and it seemed like the appropriate level of procedure
20 to have when you're deciding questions of individualized adjudicative
21 fact, especially in an area of welfare terminations, which was the
22 Goldberg vs. Kelly case.

23 But the concept of property and the concept of liberty began
24 to expand in the Supreme Court jurisprudence to include entitlements as
25 property and to include situations where people were stigmatized as
liberty interests, and at that point, with the expansion of the types of
interests that gave rise to hearings, it became clear, at least to the
Supreme Court, that you couldn't have a trial ever time an entitlement
was threatened by the government.

You had a right to a hearing, but it didn't mean a

1 trial-type hearing, and actually, what happened in the Goldberg vs.
2 Kelly aftermath is kind of interesting.

3 There's been some writing about what happened in New York,
4 where the state was faced with having to do a lot of formalized hearings
5 in the welfare termination context, and what they did was they avoided
6 hearings.

7 They tightened eligibility rules so that fewer people go on
8 the welfare rolls, they promulgated very bright-line rules, eliminated
9 special treatment waivers, and they cashed out non-monetary benefits,
10 and the upshot of all this was that it led to fewer beneficiaries
11 getting on the rolls, the elimination of adjudicators and social
12 workers, and a substitution of clerks to apply these bright-line rules.

13 Was this a net gain for the beneficiary community? Arguably
14 not.

15 And I think that agencies' ability to sort of structure
16 their proceedings to avoid formal trial-type adjudications because of
17 the cost involved led the Supreme Court to come up with the
18 three-pronged balancing test in the Matthews vs. Eldridge case, and that
19 was similar to Goldberg vs. Kelly.

20 It was a Social Security termination situation, and the
21 Court said, well, we're not going to require the 10 ingredients of
22 Goldberg vs. Kelly, we're going to have a three-part balancing test.

23 The nature of the private interest affected, first prong of
24 the test, the risk of error due to the process used and the likelihood
25 that additional procedures would reduce that risk of error, and three,
government's interest in avoiding additional procedures.

It's kind of a cost-benefit analysis, and it's much more
open-ended, obviously. The courts have to go through this balancing
test in every situation, and just a simple example, the Goss case, Goss
vs. Lopez, where the high school student was suspended for 10 days.

1 He went to a public high school. He had a right to a
2 hearing, it was an entitlement, but he didn't get a trial. He wasn't
3 able to have a trial in the auditorium of the school with counsel and
4 cross-examination.

5 The hearing he got was a chance to make his case to the
6 principal, to say I was being bullied by somebody and that's why I got
7 into a fight, and so forth. That was the hearing that the Supreme Court
8 granted him.

9 So, in every context of entitlements, whether it's prison
10 cases, public housing, student discipline, employee -- public employee
11 dismissal cases, there's sort of jurisprudence that's grown up using the
12 Matthews vs. Eldridge calculus.

13 Fortunately, the APA is not so difficult.

14 If you have a requirement of a formal adjudication required
15 by another statute, then the APA's process is required, and that
16 comports with due process, but as illustrated by the AEC act, the
17 triggering language can raise questions.

18 Section 554 of the APA specifies that it applies in every
19 case of adjudication required by statute to be determined on the record
20 after opportunity for an agency hearing.

21 Now, as the memo that you gave out accurately indicates, the
22 Supreme Court has never definitively interpreted that phrase in section
23 554, but it did interpret a nearly identical phrase in the rule-making
24 section, 553(c), to say, in the Florida East Coast case, that formal
25 rule-making is not required unless the underlying statute uses the magic
words "on the record."

 The word "hearing" itself, by itself, was not enough to
trigger the formal rule-making process, and the lower courts have
generally applied this case as reasoning to the phrase in section 554,
as well, most notably in the West Chicago case in the 7th Circuit and in

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1 the Chemical Waste Management case in the D.C. Circuit, though the
2 courts have allowed for the possibility of, quote, "exceptional
3 circumstances demonstrating that Congress intended to require the use of
4 formal adjudicatory procedures."

5 Whether these circumstances are present in relate to the NRC
6 licensing of nuclear power plants under the AEA is a very interesting
7 question. It's not what we're here to debate today, but that's where
8 the line between formal and informal adjudication is, and it becomes
9 important, because if it's not a section 554, 556, 557 type of hearing,
10 what is it?

11 The answer is it's informal adjudication. At least we call
12 it that. I mean I know it sounds pejorative to some of you, but it's
13 just -- that's what we call it in the administrative law world. It's
14 not formal adjudication, it's informal.

15 What procedures do agencies have to follow in informal
16 adjudication under the APA? Only those in section 55, which aren't very
17 much -- the right to counsel or other representative, the right to
18 retain copy of report submitted, right to a subpoena when the law
19 permits one, and a right to a statement of reasons, prompt notice of
20 denial of application and petition with reasons.

21 Now, of course, due process may require more, and if you've
22 seen my Goldberg vs. Kelly chart again, there are some numbers off to
23 the side, and those are from an article that Paul Verkail did in 1976.

24 He's now the Dean at Cardoza Law School, and he did
25 something that I thought was very helpful in thinking about informal
adjudication, because most adjudication in the Federal Government is
informal.

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 If you apply for a National Park permit, that's
adjudication. If you send an FOIA request and ask for a ruling on the
FOIA request, that's an adjudication.

1 So, obviously, most adjudications in the Federal Government
2 are informal, and what Verkail did was he looked at four departments --
3 HUD, Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior -- and he identified all the
4 non-formal, non-APA administrative law judge type of adjudications in
5 those four departments, and he found 42 of them, and then he looked at
6 the Goldberg vs. Kelly ingredients and he found -- he compared -- he
7 looked to see whether the departments offered those procedures in the 42
8 programs, and he found that almost all of the programs required notice,
9 statement of reasons, and an impartial decision-maker. About half had
10 an oral presentation of arguments. Only nine had cross-examination.

11 Now, of course, these procedures or these functions, these
12 adjudicative programs, were all over the lot -- grant programs, food
13 stamps programs, procurement, government contract type things. So, it
14 really ranged all over the place.

15 But I think it does sort of help think about the sort of
16 overall scope of agency adjudication to realize you have many, many
17 types of informal adjudications in the government.

18 Some other right to hearing issues have come up.

19 What if the agency's own regulations require a trial-type
20 hearing? Well, of course, agencies have to follow their own
21 regulations.

22 What if the regulations only use the term "hearing" and then
23 also mentioned a record and the statute did require a hearing on the
24 record? That would not be enough to trigger section 554, because agency
25 rules themselves do not trigger 554; only the statutes can do that.

 We don't want to discourage agencies from granting
additional procedural protections for fear that they might somehow
trigger a statutory requirement under section 554.

 Another hearing question that comes up is what happens when
a statute grants a right to a hearing on the record but the agency

1 issues generic rules that essentially eliminate or severely narrow the
2 issues that can be disputed in each individual case?

3 The generic rule-making issue was mentioned earlier.

4 The administrative law case law permits this. There's a
5 1966 case called the block space case, American Airlines vs. CAB, where
6 the CAB had issued a rule, gone through the rule-making procedures of
7 the APA, that permitted only all-cargo airlines to offer so-called block
8 space, which are large reserved blocks of space on aircraft that go for
9 a cheaper rate, and the rule said that combination cargo and passenger
10 airlines could not offer this type of fare, and so, they're prohibited
11 from doing this.

12 Their licenses were amended to reflect this, after the
13 rule-making process, and assume there were some good reasons to do so.

14 American Airlines was one of these combination carriers and
15 said wait a minute, we have a right to a hearing on the record under our
16 statute before the license could be amended, and the CAB denied the
17 request for a hearing, saying that the rule covered the situation; you
18 had a chance to participate in the rule-making process, raise these
19 issues, there's nothing to have a hearing about, and Judge Leventhal,
20 who was a leading administrative lawyer before he became a leading
21 administrative judge on the D.C. Circuit, went through the difference
22 between rule-making and adjudication and determined that agencies have a
23 choice to make policy through rule-making or adjudication, and in this
24 case, they went through a legitimate rule-making, and they didn't single
25 out individual carriers, they treated these categories -- all the
carriers within each category alike, all the combination carriers were
treated the same way and so forth, and the Court said the proceeding
before us is rule-making, both in form and effect, there is no
& individual action masquerading as a general rule, so they denied the
right to a hearing.

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1 The City of West Chicago case illustrates the fact, if
2 there's no disputed issue of material fact, the agency can turn down the
3 request for a hearing, even though the statute requires a hearing on the
4 record in these cases.

5 There are many statutes that now condition a right to a
6 hearing on the record on there being a disputed issue of material fact.

7 I was involved in a case involving the Bank Holding Company
8 Act, trying to block a merger of two large ATM companies in Ohio, and we
9 were representing a small ATM company that was trying to block the
10 merger, and under the Bank Holding Company Act, we had a right to a
11 hearing on the record if there was a disputed issue of material fact.

12 So, we strove mightily to come up with some factual issues
13 that we thought were disputed issues of material fact, the fact that the
14 rates would go up if the merger was allowed to go forward, because of
15 the way the switching fees work in the ATM industry, this is going to
16 create anti-competitive practices and the rates were going to go up in
17 certain jurisdictions, and the Fed said, well, these are all economic
18 issues, they're not really factual disputes, they're more like policy
19 issues, so we deny the hearing.

20 We went to the D.C. Circuit, persuaded the panel, two to
21 one, that we did have disputed issues of material fact, and so, we won
22 the first round.

23 The Fed asked for an en banc review. It was granted. So,
24 we knew we were in trouble on this issue.

25 The Fed then went to Congress and got the statute changed so
that there was no right to a hearing for anything except savings and
loans mergers.

 So, we went back to the D.C. Circuit and said, well, you
should revoke your en banc review, because this is not a precedential
case anymore. There's never going to be another ATM merger that's going

1 to be covered by this statute, and the Circuit agreed with us and
2 revoked their en banc review.

3 They also vacated the panel decision, unfortunately, and our
4 clients eventually settled with the merging companies.

5 So, everything ended okay for our clients, but it's just an
6 illustration of how important it is to be able to show disputed issued
7 of material fact and how this is such a crucial issue in many different
8 types of licensing contexts, and there are a lot of cases that go both
9 ways in the courts, saying that, yes, you should have had a hearing, no,
10 you didn't deserve to have a hearing because you didn't have a disputed
11 issue of material fact.

12 Now, another reason that the triggering language in the APA
13 is important is that, if you're proceeding under Sections 554, 6, and 7,
14 that also requires a separation of functions, and it also leads to a ban
15 on ex parte communications, and it also requires the use of
16 administrative law judges as presiding officers, unless you have a
17 special statute, like the NRC does.

18 Now, with respect to separation of functions, I'm not going
19 to really say anything. I know the NRC has struggled with this issue
20 for many years. My contribution is just a little summary that I hand
21 out to my students on separation of functions that tries to boil down
22 the APA requirements.

23 Similarly, ex parte communications -- I think that the NRC
24 has an ex parte communications rule. I think that you would probably
25 want to have one in any case, no matter what type of procedure you were
doing, but if your statute does not require formal adjudication of the
APA, there's no ex parte communications bar that applies to you under
the law.

Now, I want to also point out that the APA does provide some
greater flexibility in initial licensing. If you look at several of the

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1 sections -- for example, the separation of functions requirements don't
2 apply to initial licensing cases.

3 Most agencies have voluntarily applied them to initial
4 licensing, but the act does not require it, and some years ago,
5 Professor Mike Asimov from UCLA wrote an article urging agencies to take
6 advantage of the flexibility with respect to initial licensing cases in
7 the separation of functions area, where you have technical issues that
8 would allow more communication between staff and decision-makers,
9 non-adversarial staff especially.

10 Also, section 556(d) specifies that, in initial licensing,
11 an agency may, quote, " -- when a party will not be prejudiced thereby,
12 adopt procedures for the submission of all or part of the evidence in
13 written form."

14 So, the APA itself -- you talk about APA adjudication. It
15 allowed, in initial licensing, the agency to adopt written procedures if
16 the parties won't be prejudiced.

17 So, that's something that needs to be researched more. I
18 don't know that much about the cases in this area, but there is some --
19 there's leeway for agencies to experiment there.

20 Another key element is the presiding officer. Under section
21 556 of the APA, either the agency head, one or more members of the
22 Commission, in your case, or an administrative law judge must preside.
23 It's very rare for agency heads to do so.

24 I was interested in your sub-part M, I guess it was, that
25 sort of encourages agency heads to preside, but you know, I realize you
have special statutory authority, that famous "notwithstanding" clause,
that allows your panel members to preside rather than needing an
administrative law judge, but in general, I just want to say a few words
about what agencies are doing in this area, and we have Judge Heifetz,
who certainly knows more about this than I do, but one of the trends, I

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1 think, in the administrative law area is that agencies have tried --
2 there's sort of a trend in that agencies are seeking to avoid the use of
3 administrative law judges.

4 They're trying to find ways to use other adjudicators, even
5 in relatively formal proceedings.

6 Administrative law judges are independent officers of the
7 Federal Government. Their pay is set by statute. They have special
8 tenure protections. They have special separation of functions
9 protections. They're not subject to performance evaluation, and they
10 can't be assigned duties that are inconsistent with their role as ALJs.

11 They're still not completely independent, though, because
12 they're agency employees, they have to follow agency policy, they're
13 subject to certain managerial perks like office space, parking places,
14 and that kind of thing, they can be subject to reductions in force, and
15 you know, there are some subtle agency pressures that might be brought
16 to bear on administrative law judges.

17 I put a chart of the number of administrative law judges in
18 the various agencies at the end of your packet there, and it's a
19 year-and-a-half old now, but it shows -- I think it illustrates that
20 most of the administrative law judges are in three agencies, the Social
21 Security Administration, Labor Department, and the National Labor
22 Relations Board, and what's striking, I think, is how few administrative
23 law judges are employed by most administrative and regulatory agencies.

24 For example, the departments of agriculture, commerce,
25 education, HUD, and justice have only four, one, one, five, and six
administrative law judges respectively, these huge departments.

The department of defense, state, and veterans affairs have
none.

The five bank regulatory agencies share two, and major
adjudicatory and enforcement agencies like the Commodities Futures

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1 Trading Commission, FTC, International Trade Commission, Merit Systems
2 Protection Board, and Small Business Administration only have one or
3 two.

4 CPSC, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, your own
5 agency, the NRC, and the Postal Rate Commission have zero.

6 So, why is this? It's not because agencies have stopped
7 adjudicating. It's because they have been able to eliminate their
8 reliance on administrative law judges.

9 We did a study in Administrative Conference back in 1989,
10 and we identified almost 2,700 non-ALJ adjudicators in the Federal
11 Government, and there are lots of big programs that use
12 non-administrative law judge adjudicators, like Immigration, National
13 Appeals Division of Agriculture, all the boards of contract appeals, the
14 administrative patent judges, administrative trademark judges, Board of
15 Veterans Appeals, MSPB, EEOC -- I could go on and on.

16 Now, Congress has been complicit in this, because they've
17 allowed some agencies like EPA to use non-ALJ adjudicators to decide
18 even civil money penalty cases where the penalty isn't too large.

19 Debarment and suspension of government contractors are
20 handled by non-ALJ adjudicators.

21 So, I think the situation of the administrative adjudication
22 is quite varied throughout the U.S. Government. Why have agencies sort
23 of voted with their feet on this? Well, I realize this isn't completely
24 germane to the NRC, but I think there are three reasons, and one is that
25 I think it's become difficult for agencies to select administrative law
judges, or at least the type of judges they want, due to the operation
of the selection process and the importance of the Veterans Preference
Act in the rating of applicants for administrative law judge positions.

I don't want to go into too much detail and take too much
time there, but I think the selection process has gotten so difficult

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1 that agencies would rather hire other lawyers, other types of employees
2 to preside over even formal cases.

3 Managerial issues -- it's easier to manage most non-ALJ
4 adjudicators because at least they can be evaluated, and I think agency
5 managers feel that administrative law judges are -- you know, because
6 they're exempt from any kind of appraisal, that they'd rather have
7 somebody that they can do some sort of evaluation, and also, their
8 salaries tend to be lower.

9 So, I think agency managers have great incentive to opt for
10 using hearing officers who can be selected strategically, who are easier
11 to manage, and who can be procured for sort of bargain rates, and so,
12 you know, I'm not saying that this is a salutary development, that it's
13 a good thing, but I think that the trend is clearly for agencies to look
14 for alternatives to the formal APA administrative law judge adjudication
15 process.

16 In reality, I think it's unfortunate but understandable.

17 I think the APA does provide a good model for enforcement
18 cases, and in initial licensing cases, there is some built-in
19 flexibility, but if the agency is going to move to a more informal type
20 of adjudication, the question still remains: What steps should the
21 agency require?

22 Even in that list that Verkail provided, you know, some
23 agencies provided all 10 steps of the Goldberg vs. Kelly formula for
24 informal adjudication.

25 Which is the APA's provisions cause problems? Which is the
sub-part G provisions cause problems? Is the problem really one of case
management? Can most of the delay problems that have occurred be
addressed through strict case management?

 These are all issues that I hope this sort of overview will
help inform the discussion, and if you have any questions that I can

1 answer, I'll be happy to try to do so.

2 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you very much, Jeff, for that
3 overview.

4 Do we have some questions or comments for Jeff, anybody
5 around the table?

6 Jay?

7 SILBERG: One of the comments you made originally on your
8 view of delay as an acceptable strategy -- I was wondering if you might
9 elaborate on that a little.

10 LUBBERS: Well, I don't think delay in and of itself is a
11 good thing.

12 I mean, obviously, you need to have enough time to prepare
13 for cases and to argue cases and for the case to proceed to conclusion,
14 but in some situations, it is certainly to one party or another's
15 interest to just delay the proceeding in the hopes that it will never
16 end or that people will give up, and my only comment was that, you know,
17 I think that, if that's -- I don't think that's an acceptable goal as
18 part of, you know, fairness, efficiency, effectiveness, and
19 acceptability.

20 I don't think it's an appropriate goal in licensing, and I
21 don't think it's an appropriate thing for people to try to do to gum up
22 the ability of Federal -- of agencies like OSHA and EPA to be able to
23 regulate through rule-making.

24 I think that strategy has been part of the regulatory
25 reform, so-called, movement in Congress, and I think it's been part of
the strategy of at least some people who try to avoid decisions in other
agencies, and I think we should get beyond that as a strategy.

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CAMERON: Tony.

ROISMAN: First of all, just a point on the delay. I mean
that is sort of built into the democratic process. The Senate still has

1 the filibuster right.

2 LUBBERS: Checks and balances.

3 ROISMAN: And when the shoe's on the other foot, if it's
4 torte litigation and the defendants are utilities, delay is a very
5 popular tactic.

6 LUBBERS: Right.

7 ROISMAN: But I had a very different question for you.

8 What is the difference, as a practical matter, if any, that
9 you see between an agency that has ALJs and an agency like the Nuclear
10 Regulatory Commission, which now, I just learned, has none, no ALJs are
11 now left, although they have hearing boards and hearing board members
12 who are appointed through a process, etcetera?

13 Is there some clear delineation between the benefits and
14 disadvantages of those two?

15 LUBBERS: I've never seen such a study. I mean I think,
16 first of all, the Administrative Procedure Act specifically authorizes
17 Congress to provide for different types of hearing officers, even in APA
18 cases, even informal APA adjudication.

19 So, if you accept that what the NRC is doing is APA
20 adjudication, that's what Congress did when it allowed for the use of
21 panels.

22 You know, I think there are different types or different
23 levels of non-ALJ adjudicators throughout the government.

24 You've got GS-9 asylum officers deciding asylum cases in the
25 justice department, and you've got judges who are actually higher paid
than administrative law judges, board of contract appeals members,
deciding those cases.

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Other agencies allow their non-ALJ adjudicators to be paid
about the same as ALJs, to be as independent as ALJs, at least by
regulation and by practice, so it really depends on the agency.

1 I used to know more about how the panel worked here, but my
2 guess is that the panel has most of the ingredients of independence, if
3 not all, that someone like Judge Heifetz has.

4 Maybe Alan could speak to this question a little better than
5 I could.

6 HEIFETZ: Well, I can't speak to it in terms of the NRC,
7 because I don't have the personal knowledge, but there is a wide variety
8 of adjudicatory systems and reasons for going to administrative law
9 judges or not.

10 In a number of cases -- for instance, the EEOC, with a
11 tremendous backlog of cases, they're trying to get through process very
12 quickly, and the idea is to get as many of these so-called hearing
13 examiners as they can at a very low rate of pay -- most of them start
14 out as a hearing examiner right out of law school, and some of them are
15 capable of doing a very good job, but in another life, when I was doing
16 trial work, I recall trying an afternoon's case at the EEOC one week,
17 and that becomes a problem.

18 When you have someone who doesn't have the experience of
19 managing adjudication, when you have someone who is sitting there saying
20 I'll let the evidence in for what it's worth, records tend to get
21 larger, and time gets consumed.

22 So, it depends on the intent of the agency at the time they
23 decide how to conduct adjudications.

24 There was a comment this morning that substantive soundness
25 is not concerned with the intent of the Commission, and perhaps that's
true with regard to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. As I said, I
don't know.

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But I can tell you that intent does have something to do
with it, because essentially the administrative adjudicatory process has
elements of political structure, and it depends on who is being

1 appointed to agencies, and if you look at various agencies and various
2 administrations, you will see whether there is political influence which
3 is having an impact on adjudication or not.

4 If you look at an agency like the National Labor Relations
5 Board, it is basically an adjudicatory agency. That's what it does. It
6 is not trying to enforce an administration policy, although there's some
7 tinges to that, I grant you, but it's not a matter of fostering a
8 particular industry or not.

9 I did some work for the Interstate Commerce Commission both
10 as an enforcement attorney, an advisor to the Chairman of the
11 Commission, and an administrative law judge, and you can see various
12 changes in the results of cases depending on who was on the Commission
13 and what their objectives were.

14 Some were much more politically influenced, result-oriented,
15 if you will, in adjudications, and others were not.

16 If you have commissioners who are more result-oriented, they
17 are going to try to get away from independence in the hearing process,
18 because they can control the outcome. That's just a human response.
19 That's why they were put on the commission.

20 So, you can't divorce politics from it. It is not a court
21 that is there without regard to any policy considerations.

22 So, if you have appointees to commissions who are interested
23 straight in adjudication and the search for truth, as you were talking
24 about in terms of process, then you will not have that kind of
25 influence.

So, the variations are infinite, and you have to be
realistic to understand that there are things that go on in an
administrative adjudication inside the hearing room and outside the
hearing room and on the steps of the Capitol.

CAMERON: Tony, did your question evidence any concern about

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1 the fact that the NRC does not use administrative law judges or it was
2 just more a point of information?

3 ROISMAN: No, no. And I thought the answer was what Jeff
4 and Alan both said, which is that there's nothing magic about calling
5 someone an ALJ in order to get the qualities that are built into the ALJ
6 process, but you could have agencies which don't put those factors into
7 their non-ALJ positions and end up with bad adjudication as a result.

8 As I said before, I don't think the NRC's one of those
9 agencies, but it's an issue on which the Commission always has the
10 power, because they aren't constrained by the limits of the APA if they
11 don't use ALJs not erode some of the independence of their boards if
12 they chose to do so.

13 I think that would be a bad -- that's certainly one of the
14 options that could arguably be on the table here, is that there would be
15 some attempt to erode the independence of the licensing boards under
16 broad discretion of the agency as a, quote, "efficiency move" or
17 whatever.

18 I think it would be a very bad idea, and if anything, I
19 would argue for moving it the opposite direction, even thinking about
20 creating the licensing board as quasi-independent from the agency.

21 LUBBERS: If I could just add one point, I think that there
22 is -- as mentioned in the paper that was distributed by the staff,
23 administrative law judges are not supposed to be assigned work that's
24 inconsistent with their role as judge, and OPM is the one that
25 authorizes agencies to hire administrative law judges, and if an agency
only has non-APA-type adjudication, they won't get administrative law
judges to do that work.

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So, NRC does have some flexibility by virtue of having
non-ALJ adjudicators now, so that if they decided to move to something
modified from the APA procedure, they could use the same hearing

1 officers they have now.

2 CAMERON: Bob.

3 BACKUS: I think the issue of who is going to preside at
4 these adjudications, assuming we're going to continue to have
5 adjudications, is a very critical one, and I have to somewhat disagree
6 with Tony.

7 I think some of the presiding officers we were given on the
8 Seabrook case were an embarrassment, just terrible. Certainly Judge
9 Bollwerk was not among them. But there changes of presiding officers.

10 I think one of the things that needs to be done, whether
11 they're going to be ALJs or however they are now selected, which I'll
12 have to talk to Judge Bollwerk and see how these folks are selected --

13 BOLLWERK: I'll tell you that if you want to know, but it's
14 up to them. I don't know what kind of record you're trying to build
15 here.

16 BACKUS: I would be interested in hearing how you were all
17 selected for your jobs and how you assure independence, but I think that
18 the assurance that the fact-finders are neutral independents is a
19 critical part of improving the process, and as I said, in New Hampshire,
20 if I have to go to traffic court, I know that the judge that's going to
21 hear the case has been through a public process to be confirmed.

22 He has to go through a hearing before a governing council,
23 and of course, Federal judges have to go through a Senate confirmation
24 process and there's hearings, and something to give the public that kind
25 of confidence in the fact-finders for this agency I think would be very
important.

CAMERON: Okay. I think I do want to give Paul an
opportunity to talk about how they're selected. I guess we'll revisit
this issue perhaps later on, too, about the -- the who presides issues.
I just had one clarification on that.

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1 When you were sort of emphasizing neutrality and
2 independence, is that the problem that you're calling attention to in
3 terms of who presides, neutrality and independence, or is it also
4 expertise?

5 BACKUS: I think it's neutrality and independence more than
6 expertise, and I don't want to tar everybody that's ever been an
7 administrative -- sat on a ASLB for the NRC, but I tell you, it's not
8 just my perception, it was the perception of others that some of these
9 people were sent there with a mission to get the license issues.

10 CAMERON: Okay. So, it is neutrality.

11 Bollwerk's the only one who survived so far.

12 All right, Paul.

13 BOLLWERK: In terms of the current status of the agency in
14 terms of having ALJs -- the last ALJ that the agency had was Ivan Smith,
15 who retired about five years ago. At that point, it wasn't deemed
16 necessary for the agency to have any administrative law judges.

17 The only cases that were clearly -- and this goes back to
18 this whole question about whether it is or isn't on the record, but
19 there are Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act cases that potentially could
20 come before the agency. Those require an ALJ and they're clearly on the
21 record, but we haven't had any of those in some time. They tend to come
22 and go rather rapidly.

23 So, at current, we do not have any ALJs.

24 In terms of the administrative judges on the panel, we are
25 considered independent as a matter of policy. We're not evaluated.

 You will not find that in writing anywhere. It's not in our
manual directive. It's not in the regulations. But as a matter of
policy, the Commission does not evaluate the administrative judges.

 Up until this past year, the chief administrative judge was
a member of the SES and was evaluated on management issues.

1 As it currently stands, I am not a member of the SES, so
2 it's not even clear to me how that is going to play out, but that's a
3 different matter, and I guess I'll find out about that in the near
4 future.

5 In terms of the selection process -- and in fact, we're
6 going through this right now -- under the management directive that
7 governs the panel, there is a register that's put together of both
8 technical and legal judges, because we do have both, which makes us
9 unique in the Federal Government to some degree.

10 The process is like any other Federal hiring process in that
11 there are a list of rating factors that are put together, writing
12 samples that are collected.

13 We're asked to address the rating factors, which deal with
14 things like how much litigation experience do you have, what is your
15 decision-making ability, your writing ability, all those sorts of things
16 that you would expect.

17 The rating panel consists of myself, the deputy chief
18 administrative judge, a technical, and also an OGC representative, who
19 at this point is the solicitor of the agency.

20 We go through and rate the candidates. We then send the A
21 candidates to the Commission, and the Commission then selects who they
22 deem appropriate to be an administrative judge.

23 So, that's basically how the process works, and all that is
24 set out in a management directive that governs the panel's business.

25 ROISMAN: There used to be an advisory panel, which I gather
doesn't exist any longer, on hearing board selections.

 It was made up of -- I was on it, there were industry
representatives and others on it. ALJs were on it, from other agencies,
I think. And that was when the Commission was gearing up. There were
quite a few judges who went through that process.

1 Bob, I just want to separate my view from yours, because I
2 think it's important for us to state them separately.

3 My feeling about judges is that I've had some terrible
4 judges in my life. Some of them have been appointed to the Federal
5 bench, some have been appointed to the state bench, some have been at
6 the NRC, but in every case, I've always felt like they were judges and
7 that that's just the luck of the draw.

8 There are terrible jurors out there, you know, and all that
9 sort of stuff.

10 If the Commission has a process, I would like to see it go
11 back to having an independent advisory panel on appointments,
12 particularly if the number judges and adjudications are going to go up,
13 and I think people can go through that and -- I'm familiar with some of
14 the problems with the ALJs in some of the later Seabrook hearings, but
15 you know that's kind of the -- that's the luck of the draw.

16 I can imagine some utilities that weren't too happy about
17 some of the administrative law judges that they drew in cases where they
18 didn't like the way those judges were ruling and might have thought that
19 they were all pro-intervenor judges.

20 But all we can hope for is that there is a selection process
21 and the people who get picked -- that's why I asked the ALJ question.

22 If people get picked who have a, quote, "judicial
23 temperament," understand the idea of independence, the fact that they
24 bring their own biases to the courtroom to some extent is unavoidable,
25 and there certainly are judges who want to see the train run on time,
and they can be really tough on you if you're not ready to board the
train when the train's ready to leave the station, but I think all you
can have is a good process out there, and I am convinced from what Jeff
said that labeling the person an ALJ is neither a guarantee that you'll
get a, quote, "good judge" or that you can't get good judges, as long as

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1 they have all the other factors.

2 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks for that recommendation, also, Tony.
3 Diane?

4 CURRAN: I just want to make a follow-up question.

5 I think what you were describing, Judge Bollwerk, was the
6 process for selecting judges for employment, and one of the questions
7 that Bob was raising was how do judges get picked to sit on a particular
8 case. I wonder if you could address that.

9 BOLLWERK: Basically, that's a matter of the chief
10 administrative judge's discretion, assuming the Commission does not send
11 the case over to us with a particular judge be appointed, which the
12 Commission could do, because they have that authority, as well, but
13 generally, in looking at cases, I try to decide, you know, what is
14 everybody's case load, who's got a heavy case load, who might have a
15 little more time, what the case is going to involve, the usual things
16 that would be involved in making that sort of determination, and then a
17 panel is assigned, and I do the same thing with technical judges,
18 looking at what expertise we need, who's available, what the case is
19 going to involve, those sorts of things.

20 So, it's, you know, both to match the expertise of the folks
21 we have as well as the workload.

22 LUBBERS: There is a provision in the APA with respect to
23 administrative law judges that says that administrative law judges shall
24 be assigned to cases in rotation so far as practicable. So, it's
25 supposed to be more random with respect to administrative law judges.

Of course, if you only have one or two in the agency --

BOLLWERK: Well, right now, we only have three legal judges,
full-time legal judges, so there's not a lot of randomness there.

Larry Chandler just asked me a question of whether the
Commission had ever appointed a presiding officer, and I'm going to -- I

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1 have a recollection -- if I'm wrong, we need to correct it -- that back
2 when dealing with -- what's the reactor up in New York -- in special
3 proceedings, but other than that, I don't think the Commission has ever
4 appointed a specific presiding officer.

5 Even the most recent sub-part M case that was sent to us,
6 which is one of the ones the Commission has indicated they may doing
7 themselves from time to time, specifically, we were given the
8 opportunity to appoint whoever we felt was the appropriate -- I can't
9 remember exactly how that happened, but there was some consultation
10 about who was available, I know.

11 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks.

12 Jay.

13 SILBERG: Just two points.

14 First, on the ALJ and the presiding officer, hearing
15 examiner route, I think there are unique reasons why the ALJ process
16 would not work well at the NRC.

17 One is the fact of the three-member board, which I think has
18 been, over the 30 years or 40 years, it's been a tremendous benefit to
19 the process in coming up with decisions that make substantive sense, and
20 I remember at least being told about what life was like before the
21 technical board members were appointed, that you were getting technical
22 decisions written by lawyers who didn't understand physics.

23 I remember one case we had where the two technical board
24 members overruled the chairman, who was an ALJ, who could not understand
25 why water would not flow uphill from a cooling reservoir.

So, I think there are unique reasons in the NRC system. In
fact, I'm surprised that more agencies haven't gone to a bifurcated or
trifurcated hearing process, hearing examiner process, to get the
technical input.

We're not the only agency that has heavy technical input

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1 necessary on decisions.

2 In terms of the neutrality, you know, I understand that
3 there were some cases where people thought that they were being leaned
4 on too much by a particular judge, and it does work both ways.

5 I think the major problem that I've seen over the years is
6 not with independence, it's not with the label, but there are -- and it
7 is a problem, I think, that is behind a lot of why we're here today.

8 There are, frankly, some hearing examiners -- and mostly I
9 think it's the chairman's role -- who are good at running hearings, and
10 there are some hearing examiners, the chairman primarily, who are
11 horrible at running hearings, and that's not a problem that's unique to
12 the NRC.

13 There are certainly, as Tony said, bad judges everywhere.

14 You can look back at the O.J. Simpson trial as an example of
15 how not to run a trial, and I don't know quite how you can improve that,
16 except if there were perhaps better oversight and some ability to
17 perhaps remove the most offending examples and get rid of the chairman
18 who can't run hearings, I think that would go a long way.

19 I don't know if any of the people that I used to think of as
20 incapable of running hearings are still on the panels or not, and I
21 wouldn't address that in any event, but I think if you had hearing
22 boards that could efficiently run the process, keep the trains moving,
23 and get on-board or be left behind, I think a lot of the problems that
24 we're talking about here today would simply disappear, because we would,
25 from the industry side, be satisfied knowing that there's a process that
moves along in a timely way.

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The decision will come out how the decision will come out,
and I think, with the kind of technical boards and chairman who can
evaluate the evidence and make a determination on the record, they will
get their shot at having the decision come out as the record determines.

1 I think, if you could somehow guarantee that, we wouldn't
2 need all this stuff. The problem is you can't guarantee it, and
3 therefore, what do we do procedure-wise to improve the process?

4 CAMERON: Okay. And I think you're bringing up the case
5 management issue, and when we get further along this afternoon, when we
6 identify concerns and problems and underlying causes, case management
7 may perhaps be a fix for some of those.

8 It will be interesting to see what types of agreement we get
9 on those types of fixes.

10 Would you agree with Tony on the -- re-instituting the
11 advisory committee, assuming that there is a need in terms of new hires?

12 SILBERG: I don't know that I would. I know some of the
13 people that were appointed. I remember one particular case where my
14 partner, who was on that committee, came back and was all excited that
15 the particular candidate that he thought was great was going to get on,
16 and in hindsight, that turned out to be not such a great evaluation.

17 I'm happy to let it go with Judge Bollwerk and his cohorts
18 and John Cordes. I don't know it's worked. I don't think there's the
19 need for the massive infusion of new members that I think was one of the
20 factors behind setting up the advisory panel.

21 CAMERON: Bob.

22 BACKUS: Tony's absolutely right. You can get bad judges
23 anywhere, in state court, Federal court, at the NRC, EPA, anywhere, and
24 sometimes that is just the luck of the draw.

25 The problem we had with the Seabrook case was that it was
not perceived to be just the luck of the draw. We had one example of a
presiding officer, the lawyer member of the board, the chairman of the
board -- all of the sudden, one day, about 90 percent of the way through
the proceeding, he up and left with no notice, and the next day -- Tony
remembers this well, too -- a new presiding officer came in, and within

1 a day, we knew we had no chance, and there was never an explanation of
2 how he got picked and put in there at that point, and so, I think if the
3 system is fine -- this is maybe a public relations with the agency --
4 it's got to explain to the people, these people don't spring full-blown
5 from the head of Zeus, they have gone through a process, they are
6 legitimate and they are neutral, and here's the reason you can believe
7 that.

8 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Bob. That was a useful
9 discussion on judges.

10 I had just one question for Jeff before he sits down.

11 Your chart that you had, the Verkail chart, is mainly a
12 horizontal estimate, and I take it that, if you look down vertically
13 through all of these procedural ingredients, that there would be some
14 programs that had all of these ingredients, and I guess my point is that
15 some of these ingredients people would associate more with what people
16 call formal versus informal.

17 So, going to Mal's point about the usefulness of using these
18 labels --

19 LUBBERS: Eight of them had at least eight of the
20 procedures. Two had all had 10, four had nine, two had eight.

21 CAMERON: All right.

22 LUBBERS: It's all in that article.

23 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

24 It's almost 12:30, and I thought what I could do is go and
25 type this up and give everybody a sheet so that we could come back and
discuss this after lunch and then start to go through some of the
concerns or problems that you see with the hearing process, what the
underlying cause of that might be, and then we can circle back and try
to see what fixes are possible.

Does that sound reasonable to everybody to proceed that way?

1 Paul, do you have a comment?

2 BOLLWERK: Just one other thing for the record. If anybody
3 wants to know about the status of administrative judges, John Frye, who
4 used to be a licensing board member several years ago wrote an extensive
5 article about administrative judges and how they are picked, and it goes
6 into quite an extensive discussion about it, and that's certainly out
7 there, if you're interested in that.

8 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks for that, Paul.

9 Why don't we take a break for lunch?

10 There's a cafeteria out here that I think most of you saw.
11 There's also a larger cafeteria over in the other building, through the
12 walkway.

13 There's a gourmet food store called Eatzies next door that
14 is pretty accessible and quick, and there are some other restaurants
15 around, but why don't we be back by 1:30?

16 [Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the meeting was recessed, to
17 reconvene at 1:30 p.m., this same day.]

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A F T E R N O O N S E S S I O N

[1:43 p.m.]

CAMERON: Welcome back.

I passed two things out to you.

One is a -- I think we could call it a straw-man rather than a proposal, right, Ellen? But this is an attempt to at least set a -- sort of define the objectives of the NRC hearing process.

I want to talk about that, and you each have a copy of that, and what I'll do is I'll mark this copy up here, and we'll see where we end up with that.

What I thought it might be instructive to do, then, is to see if we can just brainstorm some concerns, problems that you see with the hearing process, and identify some underlying causes.

People might agree on the concern or the problem, disagree on what the underlying cause is, but we can at least start to go through that, and at some point, either this afternoon or tomorrow, we can talk about what are the fixes for these problems.

Is it a case management fix, or is it something else?

We're going to be sort of walking through the grand solution that Bob brought up this morning, and we will get to this second part of the equation, which is the resources issue, also, and we also want to revisit at some time Tony Roisman's suggestion of the careful evaluation of actual cases to see what worked, what didn't work. So, we don't want to lose sight of that.

The other thing, speaking of case management, Jeff Lubbers pointed out to me that, in the Administrative Conference of the United States, there was a recommendation on case management as a tool for improving agency allocation.

You each have a copy of that, and if we get to the -- when we get to case management, I think that Judge Heifetz probably wants to

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1 put a little bit of grains of salt on this recommendation.

2 LUBBERS: So do I.

3 CAMERON: Maybe everybody will, but at any rate, that's what
4 you have.

5 Any questions or comments about how we're going to proceed
6 for this afternoon?

7 [No response.]

8 CAMERON: Okay.

9 You all have the draft objective, and I broke it down into a
10 couple of different parts, instead of writing it in one paragraph,
11 because I think that that will help us to go through that.

12 No one probably has a problem with the objective of the NRC
13 hearing process, but Ellen, do you want to say anything about this
14 before we start to go through it in terms of why you believe it's
15 important to arrive at a common understanding of what the objective is?

16 You don't need to, I just wanted to give you that
17 opportunity.

18 GINSBERG: I appreciate the opportunity.

19 I think what we were trying to do was, for ourselves, try
20 and articulate what we thought the process ought to be in terms of its
21 objective in order to come up with some constructive suggestions, and it
22 seemed to us that, to come up with a list of concerns and then immediate
23 fixes to those concerns, was to go way too quickly to that process
24 without at least identifying for ourselves what we wanted to achieve in
25 the big picture, and that's why we rolled to this kind of broad
statement of what we think is an appropriate objective.

CAMERON: Okay.

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So, I think what you're saying is that, when we get to this
next step of identifying concerns, underlying causes, alternatives for
fixing those, that we should all be checking back into our objectives,

1 assuming that we can get somewhere on that.

2 Mal?

3 MURPHY: I'm sure this was inadvertent, but the NRC staff
4 didn't mean to leave out the parties, did they, provide a fair
5 opportunity for the parties and interested members of the public?

6 CAMERON: This is not the NRC staff.

7 SILBERG: I read that as meaning parties were a sub-group
8 within the interested members of the public.

9 MURPHY: I thought you read it mean that you didn't have any
10 damn rights at all, Silberg, only the public did.

11 SILBERG: Me personally?

12 CAMERON: Okay.

13 We're into the first bullet here. Mal brought up, is
14 "interested members of the public" a term that includes parties, or does
15 that need to be specified out?

16 Mal?

17 MURPHY: It doesn't to me.

18 CAMERON: Just causing trouble here.

19 MURPHY: No. I think, traditionally, most lay readers, most
20 people who aren't sitting at this table take that terminology to mean --
21 "interested members of the public" to mean those people other than the
22 applicant, the government, etcetera, and I think that's true in any
23 administrative hearing process or licensing process, not just before the
24 NRC.

25 If you're going to license a barbershop and you're talking
about the interested members of the public, I think most people assume
you aren't talking about the barber.

ROISMAN: Why don't you use your standing language?

CAMERON: Ellen, let me check back with you. Comment on
that?

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1 GINSBERG: Tony's suggestion is --

2 CAMERON: The suggestion is to provide a fair opportunity
3 for -- and the exact language is --

4 GINSBERG: -- interested persons?

5 ROISMAN: Anybody who would have standing. Of course, that
6 would include the applicant, would include the ACRS.

7 GINSBERG: We've got regulations on the books as we speak.
8 So, I think we're talking about, within that context, persons, I think,
9 would be acceptable.

10 CAMERON: What is it, Tony?

11 ROISMAN: The language of the statute Paul points out is any
12 person whose interest may be affected by the proceeding.

13 CAMERON: Does anybody have any problem with that
14 substitution, any person whose interest may be affected by the
15 proceeding? Keep in mind -- you know, I don't want to put too fine a
16 point on this. This is not necessarily something that we're drafting
17 for any publication or anything like that.

18 It's trying to get a common understanding around the table
19 about objective, and indeed, there may be more user-friendly ways to say
20 some of this stuff.

21 Steve?

22 KOHN: I'm not quite sure what the goal is in terms of this
23 objective or preamble, but I'm just going to throw out a couple of
24 things -- and I don't even think -- you know, we can sit around and
25 debate it, but the word "fair," I think is loaded, because the word
"raise," "efficiently," and "supportable" -- and I'll just start from
the top.

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"Fair." Does "fair" mean cross-examination and the
trappings of due process essential to reach a sound scientific decision,
or is "fair" allowing us to chat?

1 "Efficiently." Does "efficient" mean the time necessary for
2 world-class experts to carefully review extremely complex scientific
3 issues, or does "efficiently" mean an arbitrary deadline and run?

4 "Supportable." Does "supportable" mean the best science, or
5 does "supportable" mean get a C, kick it to the next phase, and that's
6 really, I think, what we're actually debating here, because if you
7 downgrade this process, you'll get the low road.

8 If you upgrade it, you may get the best science, and I just
9 want to just put forward -- I'm representing a great scientist at EPA,
10 not through the Whistle-Blower Center but in a personal capacity, how
11 has just pounded into me the importance of good, sound science, and
12 unless an adjudicatory process that deals with extremely technical and
13 important issues can bring that fundamental concern of good science into
14 the adjudicatory process, I think in the next phase of licensing
15 process, we're out of it.

16 So, I'd like to see the word in here "good science, world-
17 class."

18 CAMERON: I'm going to make a note of "good science, world-
19 class," but the question I had for you is, although it's very important
20 to define what "fair," for example, means, do you need to define that
21 before you would say that that was -- that that's an objective of the
22 hearing process?

23 In other words, would you want to debate whether a fair
24 opportunity should be an objective of the hearing process?

25 KOHN: I think the bottom line is fair may not be good
enough. It depends on how you define it, but fair in the context of
atomic energy and the scientific issues it raises -- and I say this from
a lot of my clients who are experts in nuclear power -- fair or do you
& want excellent? Do you want C or do you want A?

CAMERON: Okay.

1 Joe?

2 GRAY: I think the reference to fair is a reference to just,
3 not moderate, fair, or excellent.

4 As you've stated it, you can define away the problem or
5 define into the thing, the problem, by talking about fair as meaning the
6 right to cross examination, the right to extensive discovery, the right
7 to funding for all parties so that they can come up with expert
8 witnesses and whatnot.

9 I don't think that is the -- I don't think the real intent
10 here is to define fair at the beginning in such a way as to assume away
11 the problem.

12 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Joe.

13 Let's go to George and then Susan and then we'll come over
14 to Bob.

15 George?

16 EDGAR: I'll beg your indulgence first, because I missed a
17 significant portion of the morning, and if I am on the wrong step, tell
18 me, but before we get to an argument about what the adjectives are, does
19 this objective define what we want the hearing process to do?

20 Tony will remember that, in '82, we went through a re-
21 examination of the hearing process, and there's a fundamental question
22 about what do you want it to do, what's its purpose?

23 Are you trying to resolve disputes, are you trying to
24 educate the public, are you trying to inform the staff, or all of the
25 above? What's your underlying purposes here?

Once you define that, a lot of other segments of the hearing
process then have to be defined in different ways.

I'm assuming from this definition that the purpose here is
dispute resolution. Is that a fundamental on which everyone agrees?

GINSBURG: George, you missed this early part of the

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1 discussion. I proposed this just as an example of what we kicked about
2 in discussions we've had as a way of preparing for this meeting, and
3 Chip chose to use it as a straw-man so that we could get the discussion
4 going.

5 But this is not a group effort. This was something that we
6 had prepared, that I brought with me and used as an example of trying to
7 focus on the objective, as you say, of what the hearing process is
8 intended to do, rather than to try and fix ills that people identify
9 before we've identified the objective.

10 CAMERON: Does anybody have a comment on George's three
11 possible purposes, or George, do you want to say some more? Go ahead?

12 EDGAR: What is the hearing process for? Is it to resolve
13 disputes raised by the parties? Is it to educate the public? Is it to
14 inform the staff, who's the ultimate decision-maker or the person who
15 issues the license, or all of the above? And it makes a difference than
16 how you set the process in motion, depending upon what you choose for a
17 purpose, and all I'm saying is that there isn't a crisp definition of
18 why we're here within this. It's implied, I think.

19 I think what's implied in this statement is disputes
20 resolution.

21 CAMERON: Larry, do you want to comment on that?

22 CHANDLER: Given the basic structure of, certainly, current
23 practice, I think the emphasis would be on dispute resolution.

24 By its very nature, the issues that are brought before any
25 of the Commission's tribunals in this regard, but for the mandatory
hearings and construction permits, are confined to issues in
controversy.

So, in terms of education of the public, certainly, and to
an extent, as well, the staff, the airing of issues will be limited to
those which are admitted as contentions or areas of concern or whatever.

1 So, its primary focus, I would think, would have to be in
2 terms of dispute resolution.

3 CAMERON: In that context, George, do you have any comments
4 on the straw-man objective up there at all at this point?

5 EDGAR: Well, I would reverse the logic and describe the
6 objective of the process as to provide an efficient and effective
7 mechanism for resolution of disputes placed in controversy by the
8 parties.

9 CAMERON: Okay.

10 Susan?

11 HIATT: I think I could support that definition, but I think
12 what's going to happen is people are going to start quibbling about
13 definitions, like what do you mean by fair, and I wonder if the industry
14 would support the outcome in a particular case if the legally and
15 technically supportable substantive conclusion is denial of the license,
16 or does that particular example then get paraded out as an example of
17 how the process doesn't work and it's not fair?

18 CAMERON: Could we have some comments on that? And I'm
19 hoping that -- this audio system here is not working as well as it
20 should, I don't think, and I don't know if everybody heard Susan on
21 that, but Ellen, did you have a response or a question for Susan?

22 GINSBERG: Yeah. The industry's objective is not to have a
23 preordained outcome. I think we need to set that out at the outset
24 here.

25 The industry believes that it submits applications that are
subjected to scrutiny by interested parties and the staff, they address
the questions, to the extent that they are brought to their attention
through this process, and then the result is what the result is.

 You know, we talked before about the decision-makers have
separation or independence from the agency staff itself. We do not

1 believe that this process is designed to preordain the outcome, and
2 we're not looking for that result.

3 We are looking for a fair, efficient, timely, legally and
4 technically supportable results, and that's what the process we're
5 looking for -- those would be the features of the process we're looking
6 for.

7 HIATT: Well if I could follow up, could I have like a
8 guarantee here that, if we have a process and a system where the license
9 gets denied, you won't be going back to Congress and say you've got to
10 change that Atomic Energy Act?

11 RICCIO: That's one-step licensing.

12 GINSBERG: Obviously, that's a question that I think is not
13 going to be fruitful to discuss here.

14 CAMERON: Okay.

15 Jim and then Bob Backus.

16 RICCIO: I just wanted to address George's question of why
17 we're really here. We're here because the Senate oversight committee
18 was given the impression by the industry that the hearing process was
19 unnecessarily burdening them in getting done what they wanted to do, and
20 they marched out the LES case and they marched out the Vogtle case, and
21 that's why we're here today discussing this, and as much as I don't want
22 to -- I respect what you have to say, but the reality is, when we had a
23 legitimate process for license renewal and we showed a non-biased judge
24 that not only should Yankee Rowe not have been operating into the
25 future, they shouldn't have been operating in the present, that the
license was basically -- you guys came back in and you rewrote the rules
for license renewal, and now Steve has to basically battle to get any
contentions in in court.

So, when we're here talking about what are we really here
doing, we're here basically answering the chain that was pulled on NRC

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1 for having half its budget cut.

2 You know NRC was threatened with having half its budget cut
3 by the Senate oversight committee, and that's why we're here, and you
4 know, as much as I think the process doesn't work, it's not because the
5 process was set up improperly.

6 CAMERON: Okay.

7 Jim, you're going to get a chance to put some of those
8 reasons for why you think it doesn't work on the board here as soon as
9 we're done with this topic, which is probably going to be sooner rather
10 than later.

11 Bob?

12 BACKUS: To get back to what George said about the goals, I
13 would certainly agree that the primary goal of the hearing process and
14 certainly the adjudicatory process is dispute resolution. I don't think
15 that's the only goal.

16 I think another part of the goal is to assure the public and
17 have the public perceive that they have a meaningful opportunity for
18 participation.

19 I know there's other avenues for participation, but I think
20 this is an important one, and I think that's part of the goals, and in
21 that regard, I think there's something missing between the first and
22 second clauses that were proposed here, and that is not only should the
23 public have a fair -- or the persons whose interest may be affected have
24 an opportunity to raise issues, but they also should provide that those
25 issues will be neutrally addressed and -- neutrally and objectively
assessed and addressed. That's what I think is missing.

It's not just -- we don't want to just have an opportunity
to get up and have our say and be told thank you for your participation
and you're gone; we want to have the issues properly resolved through
the process that we agree should be used.

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1 CAMERON: I guess that we could accomplish that by inserting
2 something in here for the NRC to objectively and independently --
3 objectively, independently, and efficiently reach legally?

4 BACKUS: Address those issues in an objective and
5 independent manner, yes.

6 CAMERON: All right.

7 Tony?

8 ROISMAN: I agree with Bob. I think the second purpose of
9 this is to do it in a manner that makes the decisions acceptable.

10 I mean it would be unacceptable for all of us if you went
11 through all of this and then people started tearing down nuclear reactor
12 buildings because they didn't believe the process had been fair enough
13 and they didn't think that they had a chance to participate.

14 But I think there's another objective which wouldn't apply
15 if this were not nuclear power plants, and that is the objective is to
16 get it right, because the price of getting it wrong is too high, and so,
17 although I think I like the idea of us looking at these bullet by
18 bullet, I think "supportable" is not the word.

19 It's not is it supportable? That says there's a range of
20 decisions that you could reach, all of which are okay and one of which
21 might include TMI's accident, and I think that's wrong.

22 I mean it may happen, but I guess I sort of have a Rickover
23 view of the licensing process. It should have as its goal zero
24 tolerance.

25 The goal of the process should be to never make a mistake on
these kinds of issues, because I don't think there's room in this
technology for that, and I think one of the flaws in the industry's
ability to make the public accept nuclear power sort of outside the
& hearing process is the perception that they somehow or another could
tolerate, and after TMI, a lot of people would have said, well, that's

1 the end of nuclear power, and a lot of people did say, oh, that's the
2 end of nuclear power, but they still operate and they still want to be
3 relicensed, etcetera, etcetera.

4 So, the public has got to come to a realization and the
5 process has to be altered so that the end result is that there is as
6 high a probability as possible that you could come to the right
7 decision, and those of you concerned with waste disposal, I think it's
8 even -- the burden is even higher on you than it is on operating nuclear
9 plants, because that's really where the crunch is coming. That's what
10 people are concerned with.

11 Now, we could have without -- you know, we wouldn't have
12 enough time if we started now and went through the end of tomorrow to
13 discuss the issue of risk perception, but the truth is that a technology
14 that has a low probability, high consequence, which provides marginally
15 very little additional benefit to the people who are in that range, that
16 may suffer the adverse risk, has a very hard row to hoe, and the way for
17 that kind of a technology to make it in a democratic society is to set
18 the bar for itself very high.

19 So, I would not -- when we get down to -- I don't know
20 whether --

21 CAMERON: I'd put "correct" for now as sort of a placeholder
22 on that.

23 ROISMAN: So, that would be a third purpose that would come
24 in, in addition to the purpose that Bob added about just sort of public
25 acceptability of the process.

CAMERON: All right. Get it right.

ROISMAN: Yeah. Set it as your goal to get it right.

CAMERON: Larry, do you want to comment?

CHANDLER: Yeah. A couple of points, if I might.

I couldn't agree more that -- although my answer to George

1 before was that the principle purpose here of adjudications is dispute
2 resolution, there has to be public confidence in the process, the
3 integrity of the process to reach sound decisions.

4 On the other hand -- and Steve Kohn made some comments
5 earlier this morning about it, in reaction to what Tony was just talking
6 about -- I have a concern that we not sort of superimpose through the
7 adjudicatory hearing process substantive standards that differ from
8 those that are found in the Commission's substantive regulations.

9 The fundamental safety standards objectives are those set
10 forth in Part 50 for reactors. We're not only talking reactors.

11 We're talking about procedures here that will have
12 application beyond just reactors. We'll be talking about materials
13 licenses, waste, the panoply of different activities in which we engage.

14 There are our fundamental evidentiary standards that we've
15 long accepted and the judicial process accepts as sufficient, and while
16 we may talk, you know, world class and zero tolerance, there are
17 standards set by statute, there are standards set by the Commission's
18 regulations, in its substantive regulations, that we ought not be
19 tinkering with when we consider how the hearing process ought to be made
20 as defensible and as well-structured as possible to fit the needs and
21 objectives of all participants, any person whose interest may be
22 affected.

23 Just an observation.

24 Going back to the structure, maybe looking a step ahead of
25 where we were in our conversation, what I was going to suggest when we
look at these several bullets, these three pieces, is perhaps thinking
about the process in terms of the process.

Namely, when you go through, however we wish to phrase, to
provide a fair opportunity, etcetera, what we're looking at is several
different stages of a process.

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1 Translation: What does it take, what should it take for any
2 interested person to participate? Standing, contentions, those kinds of
3 issues. The intervention process.

4 Next you get into a pre-hearing process to raise well-
5 defined issues that are within the scope.

6 Fair has implications on both sides. Fair is sort of the
7 equity, the point that Joe Gray was alluding to before, an equitable
8 opportunity to participate.

9 It also implicates some of the concerns that Tony and Bob
10 Backus were talking about earlier in terms of funding.

11 So, if you look, you can structure concerns relative to
12 various stages of the process that might help frame a discussion for
13 what we currently have on the books by way of process and what we might
14 think of in terms of changes, if appropriate, to that -- to improve upon
15 the process.

16 Is it broke? What needs to be fixed? What are the kind of
17 fixes?

18 CAMERON: Okay. I think we're going to get to that, what is
19 broke, but you're taking us to the matrix.

20 CHANDLER: Yeah.

21 CAMERON: Okay.

22 Joe?

23 GRAY: I just wanted to follow up on what Tony Roisman said.
24 I really think that, beyond simple dispute resolution and ideas of
25 public confidence, the real fundamental goal ought to be to generate a
sound record on which an accurate decision can be made on issues in
dispute, and I can't conceive of another goal that would take precedence
over that.

CAMERON: Tony, do you have any problems with sound record
to make an accurate decision? I'm sorry I'm not getting all this up

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1 here.

2 ROISMAN: In the abstract, no, but I've tried to follow your
3 bullets. I haven't gotten to even bullet number two, which it seems to
4 me raise well-defined issues is only half of it -- raise and effectively
5 pursue.

6 CAMERON: Okay.

7 ROISMAN: And here, I'm using "effectively" the way I think
8 everybody has used that phrase when they talked about an effective
9 system.

10 Effectively, that is fully ventilate. You don't have an
11 issue which doesn't get adequately pursued, and because it wasn't
12 adequately pursued, as Larry points out, the Commission has rules and
13 there are burdens of proof and so forth.

14 Someone raises a perfectly legitimate point, but they're not
15 able to make the full record on it, so they lose on the burden of proof,
16 but the point is still just as good as it was, but they didn't have the
17 time to get the issue fully developed.

18 So, I don't know whether it's a sound record. Complete
19 record, from my perspective, might be better.

20 CAMERON: Okay. And I think what you're doing is putting
21 sort of a gloss on fair a la what Steve was talking about, in a sense.
22 "Effectively pursue" would be an aspect of fairness, I would imagine.

23 ROISMAN: The reason I like this -- and maybe fair and
24 meaningful might be a good way to flesh that out, but the reason I like
25 the way you wrote the bullet up is I like that word "opportunity,"
because that's sort of the starting point.

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We'd all agree that if you put a licensing notice in the
Federal Register on a Monday and you had to have your contentions in by
Tuesday, that no one would say you had a fair opportunity.

You could have all the funding in the world you wanted; you

1 could have the best experts in the world. Between Monday and Tuesday,
2 you couldn't get them.

3 So, opportunity carries a certain connotation.

4 The second paragraph, I think, or the second bullet, deals
5 with sort of the substantive processes, and the third bullet deals with
6 the consequences of doing that.

7 First, you've got a fair change, then you get this record
8 fully developed and you both raise and develop the issues, and then you
9 get a result. At least that's how I saw it.

10 CAMERON: Hopefully the right one.

11 ROISMAN: Right. Yes, hopefully the right one.

12 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

13 Mike, did you want to say something?

14 MCGARRY: I agree with Larry. Larry made the point I was
15 going to.

16 CAMERON: Okay.

17 Jay?

18 SILBERG: One thing I think we tend to be losing track of is
19 that the hearing process is not the major route for NRC to make a
20 determination an activity is safe.

21 We've totally disregarded the fact that, before you get into
22 the hearing process, except in the enforcement arena, there has been a
23 very thorough soup-to-nuts review. Some people will say the standards
24 are wrong, some people will say the staff doesn't do a good job, but
25 there is a staff review Congress has chartered that agency as doing it
right, and there are mechanisms to correct that if it's not done right.

The public acceptability issue, I think you're putting too
big a burden on the hearing process. Public acceptability of nuclear
power is something -- Congress has made at least the initial decision.
It ought not to be up to a licensing board to make publicly acceptable

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1 nuclear power.

2 There has been a governmental decision that it's determined
3 to be safe, and if it's determined to be environmentally acceptable,
4 then nuclear power is entitled to have its place in the sun, and I
5 think, for us to look at the hearing process as the sole mechanism for
6 assuring public acceptability or even a significant method for assuring
7 public acceptability is really to put a shoe on a different horse.

8 The issue is, when people come in and they are unhappy with
9 the folks that Congress has chartered as having primary responsibility
10 to carry out the safety review, how do we assure that those folks are
11 given a fair opportunity to bring issues to the fore and have those
12 issues determined, but it is not to determine whether nuclear power is
13 or is not the thing that our society should have.

14 CAMERON: I'm not sure -- Tony, you can correct me on this.

15 I wasn't sure that -- "public acceptance" may be the wrong
16 term. I thought that this point was going towards public confidence
17 that the correct decision was made because of other attributes to the
18 process. Is that what you meant, rather than public acceptance of
19 nuclear power?

20 ROISMAN: I think that's fair, but I don't agree with Jay's
21 perception of what the Congress has done.

22 To begin with, in all deference to the Congress, I don't
23 think there's a member of Congress that has the foggiest idea what's
24 involved in either building, operating, or using a nuclear power plant.

25 So, if we were to defer to their judgement that authorizing
the licensing of the plants they'd somehow or another made them publicly
acceptable, we would be making a huge mistake, and the existence of the
Commission and all of its staff and all of the people who work in it is
& evidence of the fact that the Congress at least leaves open, I would
ASS hope, equally the possibility that there would never be a nuclear power
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1 plant, as well as a possibility that there would be that once dreamed of
2 thousand nuclear power plants, and that this whole process was designed
3 for Congress to say you guys figure it out and we'll go along with you.

4 If you say one's okay, then it's okay. If you say it's not
5 okay, then it's not okay.

6 SILBERG: And that's what I said, if they meet the
7 standards, if they meet the safety requirement, then it ought to go
8 ahead. That is the function, primarily, of the staff's review.

9 ROISMAN: Right, but --

10 SILBERG: This hearing process is a check, if you will, on
11 that, and it is not to supersede it.

12 ROISMAN: But we can't lose track of the fact that a
13 significant reason why nuclear power is currently in all the trouble
14 that it's in is the issue of public acceptability.

15 So, all those things may be true, and as a lawyer, I think I
16 agree with you. The process is there; you go through the process.

17 The truth is that the thing that is crippling the nuclear
18 industry and has at least since TMI, if not before that, is that the
19 public doesn't have any confidence in this technology, and if the public
20 had confidence in it, it would be like licensing airplanes.

21 CAMERON: Okay.

22 Let's go to Tony. He's had his card up for a while, and
23 then Bob, and then we'll come back to Larry and then Ellen, and Mal, and
24 then I think we may try to conclude this and go on to identifying some
25 concerns and problems.

Tony.

THOMPSON: I think I agree with something that Larry said.

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We're dealing here with more than just reactors when we talk about the
hearing process, and we are dealing with standards that the licensee and
the affected or interested members of the public have to deal with.

1 For example, uranium mill tailings -- standards were created
2 by EPA, and NRC had to conform its standards, and the standard for site
3 closure is 1,000 years without active maintenance.

4 Now, I can tell you that industry went into the rule-making
5 and litigated and lost on the fact that you can't be anywhere -- any
6 kind of sure that you can go for 1,000 years without active maintenance,
7 but that's the standard. So, now we have to live with that.

8 Now, the standard that you apply to determining whether
9 something's going to last a thousand years without active maintenance is
10 reasonable assurance, because you're talking about probabilities over a
11 long period of time.

12 So, the question is how does risk information about the
13 subject of the license play into the hearing process? Do you require
14 the same level of scrutiny? Do you require the same kinds of zero
15 tolerance for something that is essentially low-risk and low-
16 probability?

17 And that's a question that we haven't addressed because
18 we're all talking about reactors, but there are licenses and license
19 practices within the ambit of the Atomic Energy Act, NRC, that are
20 relatively low-risk and low-probability, and so, you have to recognize
21 the hearing process, seems to me, to be efficient, has to deal with that
22 and recognize that.

23 CAMERON: Okay. That's getting us into this idea of are
24 there certain licensed activities or activities to be licensed that
25 should have a particular process associated with it, which hopefully
we'll get to tomorrow.

Bob?

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BACKUS: Jay's comment led me back to the issue of a grand
bargain, one part of which I think could involve the Atomic Energy Act.
Jay is perfectly correct. The Atomic Energy Act said that this

1 technology should be supported and advanced.

2 Of course, that act was passed before any commercial reactor
3 was in operation, before TMI, before Chernobyl. God knows it was before
4 we had electric deregulation when all the electric generators are
5 supposed to be competing in the marketplace.

6 I wonder what the industry would think if we gave them
7 something like deadlines on proceedings, and in return, when the
8 Commission sends its legislative package to Congress, it includes repeal
9 of the promotional language in the Atomic Energy Act.

10 I think the Commission may have some influence with language
11 that Congress considers.

12 CAMERON: Okay.

13 Tony, do you want to put that on the record?

14 THOMPSON: I would just say that the Commission has to take
15 any legislation to Congress. It's got to go through OMB, first of all,
16 and second of all, the promotional responsibilities under the Atomic
17 Energy Act were separated from the Commission in 1974 and given to ERTA
18 and later to DOE.

19 Now, you can argue that the Commission looks favorably on
20 licensing activities, if you want, but there's no formal statutory basis
21 for them promoting atomic energy.

22 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Tony.

23 Let's hear from Mal and then Larry and close up with Susan
24 and see if anybody out there in the audience has something to say, and
25 we'll go to Ellen, too.

Mal?

MURPHY: Yeah. Tony Roisman covered most of the point I was
going to make, and that is, from Jay's points for discussion, I think
what this language should be referring to and what we should be talking
about here for the next day-and-a-half is the public acceptance or

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1 public confidence in the particular decision which results from the
2 hearing, not public acceptance of nuclear power in general or, in my
3 case, public acceptance of deep geologic disposal, but is the public
4 confident that this decision is at least arguably correct, and I
5 disagree with Jay in that the way the hearing is conducted, openness,
6 inclusiveness, fairness, however you want to define it, etcetera, I
7 think is absolutely critical to that.

8 I mean without a full, open, all-inclusive, complete, fair,
9 etcetera, hearing using all or most of, I think, the traditional panoply
10 of hearing tools, I think there's very little chance that the public
11 would -- or at least a large segment of the public would ever have
12 confidence in the case of the high-level waste repository that the
13 decision was correct.

14 So, it seems to me that's a fundamental aspect or attribute
15 of the hearing process.

16 CAMERON: It may be different for the type of facility that
17 Tony Thompson is talking about, but we need to talk about that.

18 MURPHY: I think the public acceptance, public confidence is
19 very, very important, at least in terms of the nuclear waste side of
20 this.

21 CAMERON: And the question is what gives the public
22 confidence? What needs to be in the hearing process to give the public
23 confidence of that?

24 Larry and then Susan and the last comment from Jim.

25 Ellen, you're done, right?

GINSBURG: Well every time I think I have something to say,
someone else either addresses it or -- so, I'll wait.

CAMERON: We planned that.

Larry.

CHANDLER: Having circled the word "supportable" before and

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1 inserted the word "correct," I'd suggest using the word "sound" as an
2 alternative, reach legally and technically sound substantive
3 conclusions.

4 CAMERON: All right.

5 We plan to send this chart up to the Commission.

6 CHANDLER: With arrows, I hope.

7 I wanted to pick up on a point that Jay made, and it's a
8 little concern I would have.

9 I think the opportunity for hearings is not to focus on
10 whether -- provide an opportunity for anyone to question the staff's --
11 the soundness of the staff's activities.

12 The opportunity is there to challenge the sufficiency of the
13 application that's before the Commission, not the staff's review of
14 that.

15 CAMERON: Okay.

16 Susan.

17 HIATT: I just wanted to make a comment about the
18 promotional language in the Atomic Energy Act.

19 I can recall an ACRS letter report issued around the mid-
20 '80s that went something to the effect that, well, you know, you have
21 this population of reactors and accidents will happen and people will
22 die and that will be a tragedy, not because people would die but because
23 the resulting lack of public confidence in nuclear power would frustrate
24 the congressional intention.

25 So, maybe there is some connection here with what the
supposedly neutral regulator does.

CAMERON: So, you're suggesting that, even though the
promotional language in the Atomic Energy Act may apply to another
& agency, that occasionally either the advisory committee or someone else
connected to the Commission may give people the perception that we're

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1 still promoting.

2 HIATT: That's correct.

3 CAMERON: All right.

4 Jim?

5 RICCIO: We've heard from different ends of the table that
6 public confidence is important. I just want to draw us back to the
7 reason, again, why we're here.

8 I fail to see how circumscribing our rights to cross-
9 examination and discovery is going to enhance public confidence in
10 either the repository or the closure of a uranium mine or the further
11 operation of a nuclear power plant, and not to harken back to the SRM,
12 but you know, the Commission has already set out its direction.

13 You know, they want to dual track legislation and rule
14 change. They want to circumscribe the rights of the public.

15 So, this talk about, you know, wouldn't it be nice to have a
16 hearing process that would make us believe in nuclear power is a bit off
17 the beaten track, and as much as I like Bob's idea of a grand bargain, I
18 have very little confidence that, once that grand bargain is sent up to
19 the Congress, that we're not just going to see another instance where
20 the public's rights are shunted aside in order to provide the industry
21 with reliability in the licensing process.

22 CAMERON: Let me try to put a little context on the grand
23 bargain, as Bob termed it.

24 It may be that that grand bargain, if, indeed, such a
25 bargain was arrived at, that there may not be any need for any
legislative blessing, okay?

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The second part of the equation on resources, depending on
how that was done, that may need some sort of legislative blessing, but
it doesn't necessarily need to be a bargain that would need to go to the
Congress.

1 I thought you were going to say whether the Commission -- if
2 this group ever arrived at that, whether it would be something
3 acceptable to the Commission.

4 Ellen?

5 GINSBERG: There were two points that I think need to be
6 made, because we talk a lot about the industry, and there are people
7 speaking for the industry, and I feel obligated to make sure I put on
8 the record what I think the industry's view on some of these issues are.

9 I think, for sure, the industry believes that a very
10 critical aspect, critical objective of this process is to generate a
11 sound record on which an accurate decision can be made.

12 Tony made that point earlier. We can use a whole host of
13 different words to craft that concept, and whatever words we use, I
14 think that's the concept that -- that is where the industry is driving.
15 So, that's one point.

16 With respect to the promotional issue, I think it's
17 important -- and I have a personal experience, working as a law clerk,
18 right out of law school, for the licensing board, and I can assure you
19 that, when we looked at these controversial cases -- and it was more
20 dinners and more late nights than I care to mention -- never was the
21 issue of promoting the industry -- at that point, I barely understood
22 what the industry was -- was that an issue. That just wasn't the issue.

23 They sat around, they looked at the piping issues, they
24 looked at the feedwater issues. Whatever the issue was, that was the
25 subject of discussion.

I just think it's important to give you that insight. At
least that was my experience, and I think it's an important set of facts
to bear in mind. Paul can talk to the same issue if he chooses.

CAMERON: Okay.

And Paul, do you want to add anything?

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1 Oh, Jill, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

2 ZAMEK: I'm concerned about all the attention that's being
3 placed on public perception, because I don't think that that really has
4 a role in the hearing process and why we're here discussing what's going
5 to change, because when I go to intervene with my -- against the nuclear
6 power plant in my back yard, I'm not really concerned about public
7 perception of nuclear power or any of that.

8 What I'm interested in is public safety, my safety, my
9 family's safety, and nobody's talking about that, ensuring public
10 safety, which is supposed to be what this is all about.

11 CAMERON: I would hope that we could -- there's probably a
12 better way along those lines to say it -- a technically sound correct
13 decision, Tony Roisman's get it right, is that translates into it would
14 be safe. Is that right?

15 ROISMAN: Right.

16 CAMERON: Okay.

17 THOMPSON: You're talking about developing an adequate
18 record to make a sound decision that assures protection of public health
19 and safety. I agree. That's the end result. That's the goal.

20 ZAMEK: Public perception should not be an issue here.

21 THOMPSON: Because the public might perceive something as
22 safe and it's not or the public might perceive something as not safe and
23 it is, and the decision is supposed to be based on the compliance with
24 the regulations, the technical components, and that assure adequate
25 protection of public health and safety.

CAMERON: So, perception doesn't have any --

ZAMEK: -- bearing on the hearing process.

CAMERON: Okay.

One more comment and then I'm going to go back to Jill and
Diane on something.

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1 MURPHY: I beg to differ. In my case, at least, public
2 perception has an enormous amount to do with it. One of the things that
3 the people of Nye County, Nevada, for example, are concerned about is
4 how the public and the rest of the country and the rest of the world is
5 going to view this repository having -- what effect it's going to have
6 on their land.

7 Out in the Amargosa Valley -- you've been there, Chip -- is
8 the largest dairy in the State of Nevada, which the Department of
9 Energy, incidentally, forgets to even mention in the draft EIS, but
10 that's okay.

11 How the people in Los Angeles who buy milk perceive the
12 safety decision made by an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board on
13 licensing the Yucca Mountain repository is very important to the people
14 who run that dairy, not just have they complied with the Atomic Energy
15 Act standard of protecting to the public health and safety, but to the
16 people who buy the milk that that dairy produces or the people in Los
17 Angeles who buy the hay that's produced by the Amargosa farms -- are
18 they confident that this decision is the correct one?

19 That's very important to the people who live in that valley.

20 CAMERON: Yes, it is. Are you going back to the public
21 confidence as the bottom line?

22 MURPHY: It's a very integral, inseparable part of the
23 hearing process. The public -- it seems to me that the Commission has
24 to construct -- not to say that they don't have one already. I mean I'm
25 not conceding that there's in any way any need to change the process you
already have, but the Commission has to have in place a process which
will not only allow for the -- not only allow the agency to arrive at
the correct decision with respect to public health and safety but allow
& the public to feel, to believe, to have confidence in the fact that they
ASS have, indeed, arrived at the correct decision with respect to public
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1 health and safety.

2 There should be more than one objective. One is to license
3 the power plant, if, indeed, it is safe, and the second is not to make
4 people feel uncomfortable about it, if that's possible.

5 It seems to me that that's unavoidable, and if you have a
6 hearing process which makes a correct decision from the point of view of
7 the physics involved but scares the bejesus out of everybody within 100
8 miles, there's something wrong with that process.

9 CAMERON: Okay. That's an interesting thought to try to
10 figure out how to deal with.

11 Jill, do you have a comment on that?

12 ZAMEK: When I think of public perception and persuading
13 people to think a certain way, I think of propaganda, and that's where I
14 don't want to head, you know, with all the focus on what the public
15 thinks, you know, brush over the real issues so that they feel good
16 about this.

17 CAMERON: I think that perhaps you and Mal are using public
18 perception in perhaps two different ways. You're thinking about it as
19 the spin, propaganda.

20 MURPHY: I'm thinking about it in terms of can we cross
21 examine their scientists, for example.

22 McGARRY: Isn't public perception, at least in the sense
23 that Mal is using it, the outgrowth of a fair and meaningful
24 opportunity, some of the words Tony used, a sound and correct record
25 that objectively and independently and efficiently examines the issue?
I think that's the natural outgrowth.

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 CAMERON: That's what I would have thought would go to your
point, Mal, and I didn't know whether you had any other suggestions that
you could have a sound, etcetera, etcetera, decision but still not have
a -- not scare the bejesus out of everybody.

1 MURPHY: Well, you could. I mean you could make a decision
2 behind closed doors. You could pull the curtains and turn off the
3 lights and arrive at the correct scientific decision.

4 CAMERON: Okay. So, there's the transparency, etcetera,
5 etcetera.

6 MURPHY: Mike put his finger on it. If you get the fair and
7 -- you know, the words "opportunity," the words "fairness," etcetera,
8 all connote at least having a process which does not inhibit the public
9 arriving at some confidence that that particular decision is correct
10 based on some science or however you want to phrase it.

11 CAMERON: Jill, you wouldn't disagree with that statement,
12 would you, that Mal just made?

13 Tony, one last comment and let's go to the next part of
14 this.

15 ROISMAN: I was just going to talk about the public
16 perception question, because I think it does fit into an important
17 difference and a point that Tony was making about different kind of
18 proceedings and we look at them different kinds of ways.

19 I was at the Natural Resources Defense Counsel when they
20 split with the intervenor, Nuclear Community, and I still believe in the
21 position that we took, which was that, when it came to high-level
22 nuclear waste disposal, that issue was too important to allow it to be
23 some political -- the people who didn't want to see more nuclear power
24 plants believed that, if we pushed on that issue, making it as political
25 as possible, it would become a clog in the nuclear reactor pipe, and as
a result, nuclear reactors would have to be shut down because there was
no waste disposal solution, and the position that NRDC took on that, Tom
Cochran and I, when I was there in the organization, was that, on the
issue of nuclear waste disposal, we already had it.

Even if we didn't have a single operating nuclear reactor in

1 the country, we had all the high-level waste from the military
2 operations and the waste disposal problems were essentially identical in
3 terms of finding the repository, that if we allowed it to get
4 politicized -- in other words, if the nuclear waste disposal act
5 included essentially a gubernatorial veto, then we would end up with the
6 politically safest place to dispose of these unavoidable wastes rather
7 than the technologically safest place to dispose of these wastes.

8 Well, as you know, we lost that battle, and we now have this
9 mess in which the public perception of the dangers of nuclear waste
10 disposal may be scaring the nuclear waste disposal away from the safest
11 site.

12 I don't know if that's true, but I know that the government,
13 to some extent, didn't try to investigate sites in places where they
14 knew that it was a political dead on arrival.

15 So, they ended up at places which they thought it had
16 political viability, like land already owned by the government in some
17 way or land owned by Indians who the government still thinks they own,
18 but something like that, and so, there are public perception issues that
19 actually end up going to the merits.

20 I don't think they go to the merits on nuclear power plants,
21 as such, but I think they really do go to the merits on some of these
22 other issues.

23 So, while I agree with Jill's point, the idea here is not to
24 create a Madison Avenue ad campaign, get ourselves a logo and something
25 like Ready Kilowatt or something and sell it, I think that, until the
public has confidence in the process, they can't have confidence in the
decision.

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Except with the exception of George, who tells me he went to
engineering school, probably most of us here at the table don't have the
ability to make a nuclear engineering safety decision on our own. We're

1 also trust it to somebody else.

2 So, everybody's going to end up trusting it to somebody
3 else. The question is, is the process such that you're willing to do
4 that or are you unwilling to do that? But Mal's point is right -- or
5 Mike's point -- which is that, if we go through all those other things,
6 what comes out at the other end is all those objectives, dispute
7 resolution, and public acceptance, but if it didn't produce public
8 acceptance at the end, that would be, for me, a red flag that we'd done
9 something wrong, we didn't get fair right or we didn't get opportunity
10 right or we didn't get sound right or we didn't get correct right in
11 terms of all the details that we attach to the platitude that whatever
12 that statement ends up being, it will be, until we put the meat on it.

13 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Tony, for that. That was a good
14 closing remark on this particular segment.

15 What I'd like to suggest that we do -- and I'll ask if
16 anybody has a comment in the audience in a minute on what we just
17 discussed -- is I would like to go around to all of you -- I don't want
18 to have you give me every concern or problem that you see with the
19 current hearing process now.

20 We'll get those down, and if you could give me an underlying
21 cause, sort of get these down before we go and evaluate them and, at
22 some point, take a look at what are the fixes?

23 Do people agree, and what are the fixes to these problems,
24 and I think that these fixes are going to take us back into all of the
25 phrases and terms in the objective that we've just been talking about,
actually.

Does anybody in the audience have anything on the objective
of the hearing process discussion?

Yes, Steve. Just identify yourself and affiliation for the
record, please.

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1 CROCKETT: I'm Steve Crockett. I am in Commissioner
2 McGaffigan's office.

3 I would like to make essentially two points, one by way of
4 clearing some ground so that we don't shortchange this discussion too
5 much, and I want to reply to Jim Riccio.

6 The issue of whether there should be hearings and what the
7 process should be, the issue of whether regulations should be risk-
8 informed or not, any of those issues which have come so much to the
9 front and center since our near-death experience with the Congress last
10 year have been issues which have been there for a long time.

11 They are being raised by persons and organizations that will
12 keep raising them long after the current composition of the Congress
13 changes.

14 I have been working on these issues for years while our
15 committee oversight groups have changed. They will not go away. We
16 have to deal with them. We have to face them. The questions are
17 permanent.

18 I give you as one example Justice Breyer's 1993 book on
19 "Breaking the Vicious Circle." That raises issues about risk-informed
20 regulation not just of nuclear power but across the government, every
21 health and safety agency has to look into those.

22 So, I think you have to keep pressing the discussion that
23 you're having.

24 Second, any of the aims of the hearing process that any of
25 you, NRC or other people, have raised here today are all aims that can
be met through processes other than hearings. I am not yet hearing from
you anything which only hearings can do.

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 The public can be educated and should be educated through
the availability of massive amounts of information, accessible to
everybody in a short period of time. That doesn't take a hearing.

1 Disputes can be resolved through devices other than
2 hearings. The public can be given a fair chance to participate through
3 devices other than hearings.

4 Commissioner McGaffigan has argued that, in fact, people
5 other than parties immediately interested in a particular licensing
6 proceeding should have an opportunity to participate in licensing
7 decisions.

8 A sound record which can serve as the basis for a decision
9 has to be compiled in any case, whether there is a hearing or not.

10 I have not yet heard a reason why a hearing has to be held
11 rather than some other kind of device. I think that's a question that
12 you have to at least keep in the back of your minds, especially
13 considering that the NRC is the only agency that has such a statutory
14 requirement laid upon it.

15 Now, maybe Mr. Roisman is right, that it has such a
16 requirement laid upon it because this is the only technology in which
17 zero tolerance has to be the policy, but I'm not sure that's true.

18 ROISMAN: Which is not true? Zero tolerance?

19 CROCKETT: I'm not sure that nuclear power is the only
20 advanced technology in which zero tolerance could be argued to be an
21 advisable goal.

22 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Steve, for the first point in
23 terms of the need to keep discussing and debating these issues, and
24 also, we have been and, I think, will be addressing the second point
25 that you raised.

Steve, do you want to respond?

KOHN: I wanted to respond on the not yet heard why a
hearing must be held. I can wait and we get into at a later point, but
he did pose that question. It might be time to take a break, but I'm
more than willing to give my view on that.

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1 CAMERON: I think we're going to get into that, and let me
2 talk to you about that at the break, and we'll see where to put that in,
3 and Steve, hopefully, you're going to be able to be with us?

4 CROCKETT: Having my remark reflected back by you right now
5 makes me realize that I'm probably putting an emphasis in the wrong
6 place.

7 I don't want to raise here a question which would invite
8 your consideration whether the Atomic Energy Act should be rewritten so
9 that 189(a) is no longer in it. I'm not posing that question.

10 Rather, I'm asking you, since 189(a) is there and we have to
11 decide what the best thing to do under it is, that when you ask yourself
12 what are the aims of the hearing process, you try not to be -- you may
13 ultimately have to be satisfied with the kind of answer that I hear from
14 you but don't like, but look to see whether there is something that can
15 be done uniquely with it.

16 Is there some purpose which is served only by a hearing
17 under 189(a)?

18 Now, let me put the question in a slightly different way.

19 You are here considering the form of a hearing under 189(a).
20 I ask you to consider a different aspect of the form.

21 189(a) is the one door through which the licensing decision
22 ceases to be the licensing decision of the staff. Looked at from that
23 point of view, it's very odd. It's doubly odd, because it puts the
24 Commission in the ultimate decision point.

25 It takes a politically appointed body which answers as much
to Congress as it does to the President, but the initial route to the
Commission's decision is through an independent judge, like Judge

Bollwerk, but at that point, it ceases to be in the hands of the staff.

Now, what decision is it, what important technical get-it-
right decision is it that has to be made by taking it out of the hands

1 of the long-term, steady-state civil service and getting it into the
2 hands of the shorter-termed politically-appointed body called the
3 Commission?

4 It's very odd, but there may be real opportunities there,
5 and so, I would ask you, when you think about the form of the hearing,
6 think about what kinds of decisions are best made by such an unusual
7 structure.

8 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

9 KOHN: I just want to use the example of the Vogtle
10 proceeding in which there was a major technical issue, and if you sat in
11 that proceeding, which I think the industry has criticized, but what you
12 saw -- there was a whistle-blower, whom I generally represent, a
13 technical expert thrown out of the industry, someone with impeccable
14 credentials, and when this man assisted in the cross-examination of the
15 NRC witnesses and the utility witnesses and you did that process known
16 as the adversarial system, it really demonstrated real scientific
17 deficiencies in the safety of that plant, enough to have the board
18 essentially say we're going to go look into sua sponte, major root cause
19 issues here, because what you have, what major didn't exist 20 or 25
20 years ago, in a lot of other earlier licensing proceedings, you have a
21 lot of whistle-blowers, people with tremendous technical expertise, who
22 can add to a safety proceeding in a manner which only the adversarial
23 system will allow, because when you put the engineer up on the stand who
24 says this is safe and we have someone to cross-examine that person and
25 we have a neutral judge and a transcript and judicial review, maybe
we'll get to the truth, but once you pull that out, the same whistle-
blowers who have been tossed out of industry, illegally, many of them --
their input will be gone, and I want to go back to plant Vogtle, because
I represent two clients down there. One settled.

 I have another client, Marvin Hobbie. This Commission

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1 issued a level one violation, the highest possible violation in the
2 regulatory hierarchy, about this man's illegal discharge, and that was
3 1995, and the utility has, I think, improperly been fighting and
4 fighting and fighting, and we've been raising these concerns.

5 It's now 1999. He's been out of work for nine years, and
6 the Commission hasn't lifted a finger to get this man back to work, to
7 address his concerns, nothing.

8 The only place Mr. Hobbie will have an opportunity again is
9 if Southern Company wants to relicense Hatch and he can come in and
10 testify, but when you're talking about delays, I have a man who went
11 from \$120,000-a-year job in which Admiral Wilkinson, the former head of
12 INPO, took the stand and said he was a great man and a great asset to
13 the nuclear industry -- he's been out of work nine years, and you're
14 talking about delayed proceedings?

15 CROCKETT: I'm not talking about delayed proceedings.

16 KOHN: Mr. Hobbie still is out of the industry.

17 CAMERON: Steve, I think, if you're able to stick with us
18 for today and tomorrow morning, I think you'll get some more partial
19 answers to this.

20 What I'd like to do now, at least start on, is get some
21 opinions, perspectives from all of you on what is broken, and why is it
22 broken, and I was going to start with Diane and Jill on this end of the
23 table and then go over to Tony to get your perspectives.

24 CURRAN: I've got a long list, but I guess I'll start with
25 my favorites.

We're talking about sub-part G here? Could be anything,
huh?

CAMERON: Larry, I just want to check. Right? Could be
anything, right?

CHANDLER: Well, I would think so.

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1 CAMERON: Okay.

2 CHANDLER: I think the overall objective, the mission we're
3 on, is to look at all of the hearing processes that the Commission has
4 on the books right now.

5 CAMERON: Thanks, Larry.

6 CURRAN: I think we said before that, when you compare G
7 and, say, L, which is the most formal with the least formal, with G, the
8 advantage is you get discovery and cross-examination, the disadvantage
9 is it's very difficult to get in in the first place.

10 With the informal proceeding, it's easier to get in, but
11 once you get in, the amount of information that you have access to is
12 restricted to what the staff puts in the public document room, there's
13 no discovery, there's no cross-examination, and I think Tony was
14 referring to the very large amount of paper that sometimes gets filed in
15 these things, partly because you don't have a chance to winnow and hone
16 things down, you've basically got to take a shot at this enormous record
17 that you've got and address the evidence that's in there, but to get
18 back to sub-part G, which is, I think, a major concern here because of
19 reactor relicensing, the raised standard for admissibility of
20 contentions has really had, I think, a chilling effect on intervenor
21 ability to participate in NRC licensing cases, because as Bob was
22 saying, you essentially have to prove your case right at the get-go,
23 when the application is filed. It's a very, very high standard.

24 It's daunting. It forces one to make a lot of choices right
25 at the beginning. You can do the best job you think you can possibly
do, bringing to bear all of the evidence that you can think of, and
still not get issues in, and it raises -- there is definitely a public
perception that this is -- the bar has been raised to the point where
the public is not really invited.

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You know, if you're clever enough to somehow scale this

1 hurdle on at least a couple issues, you are one successful person, but
2 you know, that's not the way it should be.

3 Another major problem that goes along with that is that
4 generally when the application is filed, it's not complete, and I have
5 found many times, if your complaint is there isn't enough information
6 here on which to conclude that the regulation is satisfied, it's thrown
7 back at you, you don't have any evidence to support your contention,
8 you're out.

9 So, again, the perception and the reality is that it's very
10 difficult. The target is moving all the time, but the intervenor is
11 standing still.

12 Then, once you get an issue into a sub-part G proceeding,
13 there's a constant obligation to revise your contention or else risk
14 having it thrown out in summary judgement, and if you do revise the
15 contention, it's the intervenor -- although, you know, it's not the
16 intervenor's problem that the application is constantly being revised
17 and wasn't complete at the outset, but it becomes the intervenor's
18 burden of satisfying a significant good cause standard of keeping the
19 contention alive as the application changes.

20 Again, the target keeps moving, but the intervenor is held
21 still.

22 CAMERON: Before we see if Jill has anything, I just want to
23 make sure that I got this. It's difficult to get into sub-part G
24 proceedings, and the public perception is that the process is designed
25 to keep the public out, they're not invited into the proceeding, there's
not a fair opportunity to go back to our objectives that we talked
about.

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The cause of too difficult to get in is the contention
standard is too high, you almost have to prove your case right at the
beginning, and it's made more difficult to get an acceptable contention

1 in because there's a lack of available information that you might need
2 that you don't have access to to do that?

3 CURRAN: Right.

4 CAMERON: Okay. Good. All right.

5 Larry, do you have a problem with the current hearing
6 process? I don't want to get comments on this, but if you want to ask a
7 clarifying question, go ahead.

8 CHANDLER: That's exactly what I'd like to do.

9 The standard we're talking about, of course, is the one
10 that's been in place for 10 years. It hasn't been changed more
11 recently, as I recall.

12 CURRAN: It's recent in my life.

13 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

14 CHANDLER: The clarification I would like to get is with
15 respect to the last point that you made, Diane, in terms of lack of
16 availability of information makes it difficult.

17 I understood earlier, the comments you made with respect to
18 changes in information, caused by an applicant's periodic updating or
19 revision of an application, how that could bear on the contentions that
20 have been previously admitted, but I don't quite understand it in terms
21 of the sufficiency of available information at the outset.

22 In other words, an application has been tendered by an
23 applicant, it's publicly available, and where is the -- what is the
24 unavailability of information in terms of then casting a sufficient
25 contention?

CURRAN: Well, for instance, if you come in and say the
applicant makes X and such an assertion but hasn't done the calculation
to support it and my expert says I can't verify whether what the
application is saying is correct, because I haven't had access to that
calculation, whether it's because the calculation wasn't submitted or

1 whether it hasn't been done yet, but then the agency's response is,
2 well, you haven't -- you, the intervenor, haven't done an analysis, you
3 haven't given me evidence why whatever this assertion isn't supported,
4 and then it's sort of a circular kind of thing.

5 CHANDLER: It's almost more the first issue, I think, that
6 you're raising, that the standard is too high, that you essentially have
7 to prove your case at the time you try and submit your contention.

8 It's not just simply showing a deficiency in the application
9 but establishing as a matter of fact that the application is incorrect
10 or inaccurate with respect to a particular point.

11 CURRAN: Yeah, that's probably fair.

12 CAMERON: Okay. Let's see if Jill has anything.

13 Do you want to add anything about problems that you see?

14 ZAMEK: I do.

15 CAMERON: Go ahead.

16 ZAMEK: One of them is the generic issue, where the public
17 does not have the opportunity to address certain issues, and there are a
18 lot of them. The waste issue is one of them.

19 CAMERON: In other words, issues taken off the table through
20 rule-making are rather generic types of things.

21 I guess that the issue is not -- I guess that the concern
22 would be that not all the issues are up for discussion and the -- I
23 guess the underlying cause of that is that the issues have been taken
24 off the table by generic mechanisms.

25 CHANDLER: Rule-making.

CAMERON: This is the NRC, right?

CURRAN: Making a generic environmental impact statement,
which is often reflected in the rule-making, but all the reasoning is in
& the EIS.

RICCIO: Chip, if I could just give Larry an example, look

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1 at Calvert Cliffs. Almost as much has been filed since these guys
2 intervened than was originally on the docket.

3 There's no way you can present, you know, basically a prima
4 facie case when you only have half a license application there or the
5 relicensing application there.

6 SILBERG: But in the 1970s, it was the intervenors who
7 wanted the notice of opportunity to be filed early so people could get
8 in at the beginning and not wait till the staff review was complete.

9 ROISMAN: No, that's not right. They don't get in at all
10 until the notice is filed when all that work's been done.

11 The problem -- and it was number one on my list -- was you
12 must let the public sit in on the staff vendor and then staff utility
13 process, then assuming that we've dealt with this funding issue -- then
14 you can legitimately say to them, okay, you've been part of the process
15 from day one, we're now at the end of the process, you've identified the
16 things you don't agree with, presumably the utility has identified the
17 things it doesn't agree with, the vendor has identified the things that
18 they don't agree with, does anybody want to fight about it in a hearing
19 and we'll go to a hearing board and we'll resolve it.

20 Then you can fairly say to someone I want to know exactly
21 what you object to.

22 You don't have to worry about having seen the calculation,
23 because you'll be there at the meeting when the guys says, hey, I did my
24 calculation and it showed this was all right, and then you'll raise your
25 hand and you'll say, sir, we'd like to see calculation.

Even if the staff doesn't ask for it, you'll ask for it.

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But what's happened is the industry and the staff spend
maybe years working together to come to a conclusion, and then they
burst it out on the public and say, okay, guys, let's hear from you
right away, what don't you like about this?

1 Let us in from day one. Don't hide it. Really have
2 openness, or as this I think somewhat inappropriately refers to as
3 transparency.

4 No internal memos, all the center's views fully laid out on
5 the record and available to anybody to look at, from your vendors, from
6 your utilities, from your consultants, from your staff. Get it all out.

7 SILBERG: Name one organization in the world that operates
8 that way?

9 ROISMAN: Why shouldn't it?

10 SILBERG: Because it doesn't make sense.

11 ROISMAN: Of course it makes sense. It makes sense if you
12 want to have a process which at the end -- you want at the end, when all
13 of this stuff has gone back and forth, you want at the end quick
14 decision. Okay. I think a quick decision is possible if everybody
15 started at the same time.

16 But what you want to do is you want to run a 26-mile
17 marathon, and at the 25th mile, you yell back to the starting gate and
18 say, okay, intervenor, get started. That, I think, is really central.

19 CAMERON: This sounds like we're getting into perhaps a
20 potential option to fix this, and I know that we have some other things
21 to say.

22 ROISMAN: You were asking for problems, and that's a
23 problem.

24 CAMERON: Okay.

25 ROISMAN: A problem is that the public doesn't get to
participate meaningfully in the process until the process is essentially
over, and if I were on the other side, I'd be complaining, too.

 I spent three years getting the license through the staff,
who beat the heck out of me all the way along, and now that I'm done,
I've got some intervenor who comes along, a term that is itself

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1 pejorative, an intervenor who comes along, a Johnny come lately, and he
2 says I want to go through the whole thing again, and I can see why that
3 would be frustrating to the industry, but see it from the standpoint of
4 the citizen.

5 It's frustrating to them to not have been there at the
6 inception. In fact, if they were, I think they would understand where
7 the choices were made and be more comfortable with the choices that they
8 understood from day one.

9 So, the first thing would be an openness issue, part of the
10 staff deliberations and all the other deliberations. I mean what is it
11 about an internal memorandum that makes it somehow or another -- this
12 isn't like, you know, showing private parts.

13 This is real stuff somebody wrote in a memo that something
14 was wrong.

15 SILBERG: We don't get to see them either.

16 ROISMAN: You should see them. Why shouldn't you? I'll
17 support you on that. All the ones that I've been in that did run that
18 way ran better for it.

19 CAMERON: Okay. We're going to come back and debate these,
20 and that's why I don't want to even like get into some of this
21 clarification business, because we'll never get through this. So, what
22 I want to do is identify some problems.

23 ROISMAN: The next one, I think there's an objectivity
24 problem, and I'm glad that a representative of the Commissioners is
25 here.

I think that we need to take the Commissioners out of the
process.

The Commission should set policy, and it should review
decisions of licensing boards on policy concerns, but it should not be
the ultimate decider, and I think that the gentleman from the -- is it

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1 Steve? I think Steve made the point that the Commission is getting
2 involved in looking at stuff that the staff has already done, and I
3 think there is a problem with that.

4 I think that the staff is the arm of the Commission, and
5 they should be. They should reach their decisions. These issues should
6 to a licensing board, and I would favor the reinstatement of the Appeal
7 Board, and once that's over, the Commission review should be limited to
8 policy questions only.

9 CAMERON: Tony, can I just ask you, is that because of the
10 potential political aspects or not being able to come up to speed to
11 make the decision?

12 ROISMAN: I think it's much more the second. I mean the
13 Commission is less qualified than the licensing board to make the
14 substantive decision, and because of the appropriate limitations of the
15 ex parte rule, they can't really rely on the staff to help them make the
16 decision.

17 So, you have a board that sits for a year or two or whatever
18 it is, two technical members, a lawyer, they go through this whole
19 thing, and they say, based upon everything that we looked at, we decided
20 the right answer is this, and then you let an appeal board, also made up
21 of technical member and legal members, review that, and they say we
22 either endorse it or we endorse this much of it, reverse that much of
23 it, whatever, and then we send it to a group of commissioners who
24 probably don't have the time, certainly don't have the staff, because
25 the real staff is now a party -- the real substantive staff is now a
party -- to really get into the substance.

ANN They should be concerned with the policy. If someone is
RIL making a brand new policy decision, of course they should make that.
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& Then go straight to the courts with it.
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OCI All right. That's the second.
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1 Third thing: We talked about the fairness and opportunity
2 question. So, I'm going to put funding of citizen participants on that,
3 and I don't put that on there because the citizens need the money.

4 I put that on there because I think both the regulatory
5 staff and the utility need the benefit of that objective, independent
6 challenge to what they are doing, and so, I think there's a real
7 benefit.

8 I reinforce the point that was made by Jill. The turning of
9 issues that belong at the licensing process into generic issues just
10 about the time it looks like they're going to get important in licensing
11 issues does seem as I think one Court of Appeals referred to as
12 disingenuous.

13 I think that it -- there needs to be some limit to the use
14 of that authority.

15 CAMERON: We'll get to that.

16 ROISMAN: Recognizing that that authority is there.

17 I think all of those things go to what I believe is what the
18 Commission, the utilities want. They want a process which, one, gives
19 them certainty, gets completed in a reasonable period of time, and they
20 can go on.

21 I think that Jay speaks what I believe is the utility's
22 view, and that is the idea that they can tolerate a no.

23 What they can't tolerate is seven years of not knowing yes
24 or no, and I'm sympathetic to that, but that process -- if you want to
25 get everybody started at the same time on the marathon, you have to
start them on the same day, at the same moment in time.

 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

 Let's see if we can get everybody out here on what their
& particular problem is.

 Tony, I was going to go to you next, and then we're going to

1 come back and we'll have a discussion of all this.

2 THOMPSON: Once again, I'm not speaking of reactors. I'm
3 speaking of the materials licensees and the sub-part L-type paper
4 proceeding.

5 We have a lot of problems. For example, we didn't have a
6 whole lot of hearings on uranium recovery issues for many, many years.
7 All of the sudden, in the last three or four years, two-and-a-half,
8 three years, we've had 20 of them.

9 As a result, neither the NRC legal staff or the presiding
10 officers had much experience with the portions of the Atomic Energy Act
11 that apply to these facilities, and so, when we get into a process where
12 it's only on paper and the people coming in from the outside, the
13 intervenors or the interested parties, don't understand the process much
14 better, we wind up having a very protracted kind of situation, and one
15 of the things that needs to be done, it seems to me, is that the
16 presiding officer has got to control the paper proceeding.

17 The rules, for example, do not -- if the rules mandate you
18 have an opportunity to reply, obviously you have the opportunity to
19 reply.

20 If they don't mandate an opportunity to reply, then you
21 shouldn't be able to request an opportunity to reply and then petition
22 for rehearing on the request that was denied and petition for
23 interlocutory review, because that is not leading towards a fair and
24 efficient decision-making process.

25 I would say that, with respect to generic proceedings, I
mean if you have rules -- for example, the GEIS for uranium mill
tailings says this deals with the generic issues related to this
particular part of the fuel cycle, but every individual license site is
going to have to justify based on either an ER, EA, in some cases an
EIS, depending upon what the activity is involved, and those rules have

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1 been in place for 15 years, and to come into a proceeding and start
2 arguing about the NRC regulatory program is a waste of time.

3 The presiding officer should say, you know, you've got to
4 challenge those things within 60 days or you're out, you know, and you
5 can't come in and complain about the Appendix A regulations 15 years
6 after they've been on the books.

7 So, there has to be, I think, some sort of controls on the
8 informal hearing process, and the presiding officer, I think, bears the
9 burden.

10 The bar is lower, as Diane said, for standing, and frankly,
11 in some cases, what we have is people that come in, and the judge will
12 give them three and four chances to revise their filing in order to
13 satisfy standing requirements, and by the time all that's done, the
14 licensee's spent 15,000 bucks pointing out the fact that, you know, it
15 isn't any different than it was before.

16 I mean there has to be some limit on how many times you get
17 to go to the well. If we're supposed to live by the rules, recognizing
18 that a pro se person is going to get a little bit of an extra break --
19 they don't need to get three and four bites, and that's what we've been
20 experiencing.

21 And I think the other thing to remember, at least as far as
22 I'm concerned, is that the NRC is, by definition and by statute, as an
23 independent regulatory agency, a reactive body.

24 The licensee has the prime responsibility to propose either
25 a license amendment or a license application. The NRC is limited to
accepting it, rejecting it, or accepting it with conditions,
essentially.

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And so, by definition, if we're not going to have just sort
of an arbitrary end to a license application, it's an iterative process.

I don't know why, for example, if a uranium recovery

1 licensee applies for a license amendment for a reclamation plan and it's
2 noticed in the Federal Register, why people can't get in and get
3 involved in the information and the discussions right from the
4 beginning.

5 It may be different in the reactor side, but it's certainly
6 not -- NRC has to notice every meeting with a licensee that involves a
7 discussion of a regulatory issue, and we frequently have people who are
8 adverse to our interest, such as, for example, Enviro-Care, who I
9 wouldn't exactly call a public interest group, sitting involved with us
10 and the Commission staff as we're discussing what are the regulatory
11 requirements or what are the things the staff wants to see or what
12 information do they need for this or that or the other.

13 And frankly, in an informal hearing process, I wouldn't
14 object to oral proceedings if there were a means to control things.

15 We had, in the old days, in the MSHA area, we used to have -
16 - the statements were provided -- not even provided in advance, but if
17 you could provide witness statements in advance, if you could try to get
18 together and agree on stipulating to facts, people can read their
19 statement into the record, they can be cross-examined, and then you can
20 go on.

21 I don't object to oral parts of informal hearings, but what
22 I really think is important is that the judges and the presiding
23 officers need to develop some guidelines, and it's only fair if
24 everybody understands what those guidelines are, that Diane and I both
25 understand what is expected of us, and if that's the case and either one
of us doesn't measure up, then we have to take that. That's our
problem.

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 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Tony, and as I just told Ellen, we
are going to come back and discuss each of these, okay? I'm trying to
see if we can exhaust -- sort of get a litany of potential problems up

1 there to discuss it at one time.

2 THOMPSON: I just wanted to add one more thing, and that is
3 that I think that, particularly with an informal hearing process, you
4 set out the outlines of the process, but depending upon what the issues,
5 the technical or health and safety issues that are the focus of the
6 inquiry are, then I think risk-informed control of the proceeding by the
7 presiding officer is important.

8 In other words, the presiding officer in a hearing that
9 involves some minor thing that somebody doesn't understand and it isn't
10 really a big deal anyway doesn't need to have all of the trappings of
11 something that, for example, a uranium conversion facility, where a
12 release of certain uranium gases could pose a threat both to workers and
13 public health and safety, significant threat.

14 So, I think there needs to be some risk-informed approach of
15 the presiding officers, and the Commission needs to give them guidance,
16 that we don't necessarily require the same level of assurance for
17 something, in Tony's words -- just changing it around slightly -- low-
18 probability and low-risk.

19 There's a difference between low-probability and low-risk
20 and low-probability and high-risk of adverse impact.

21 CAMERON: Okay. I guess we probably have to be a little bit
22 more concise in putting these problems up, because there's a lot of good
23 commentary associated with it that is getting everybody's juices going
24 about responding, and we'll probably never work out way out of this if
25 we do that.

We're getting ready to take a break, and I know that Diane -
- I want to give Diane and Larry a chance to respond to Tony, but Mike
McGarry, do you have some examples of, you know, concerns, problems with
& the existing hearing process?

McGARRY: Observations rather than concerns, and this is

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1 more meat and potatoes. I think Tony Roisman took us to a nice plane.
2 It was at a higher level. This is a little lower level.

3 One is efficient discovery. I think we all would agree, too
4 many fights, too many motions. I would subscribe to the implementation
5 of Rule 26 making documents available and let's get on with it.

6 Efficient conduct of the hearing. I'm not necessarily in
7 favor or disfavor of a rocket docket. I'm not suggesting that when I
8 say efficient conduct of a hearing, but reasonable case management.

9 Third, efficient decision-making. I've been scratching my
10 head thinking about how many cases I've been involved in and how many
11 cases where I just think it took too long for a decision to be rendered,
12 and we understand that the boards are busy, at least in the past they
13 were. Now they're probably just as busy, because there are fewer board
14 members.

15 I don't need to get into particulars, but there are more
16 more than one or two examples where any reasonable person would say that
17 just took too long.

18 Fourth, role the staff. From my perspective, representing
19 utility clients, you can't get to it until you've got an SER or an EIS,
20 and yet, you've started the process and we're into discovery.

21 I wonder if the process can earlier focus on the five or six
22 contentions that are at issue and develop positions on those matters as
23 we all go forward.

24 Fifth and last, novel questions. Questions come up in
25 hearings -- Diane and I had several. One was the role of competition in
an NRC license. Another one was the scope of attention and review of
the issue of -- important issue of environmental justice.

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We all have issues from time to time that arise that they
don't necessarily lend themselves to a decision by the board and then
maybe you go up for an interlocutory appeal, but clearly we all

1 recognize they're going to be big items and perhaps some vehicle to get
2 novel questions to the Commission so we can establish the Commission, so
3 we know what we all have to deal with.

4 CAMERON: Thank you, Mike.

5 Susan?

6 HIATT: I just wanted to ask Mike real quick, when you talk
7 about competition, are you talking about whether an economic competitor
8 should have standing?

9 McGARRY: Yeah, that issue.

10 CAMERON: Susan, do you want to raise anything that you
11 haven't heard so far?

12 HIATT: I'd like to tough again on the issue of delay. I
13 said earlier that, in my view, delay can be a legitimate strategy, but
14 that's the case, really, when that's the only thing left to us, when we
15 can't win fair and square, because either there's a biased agency or
16 because the vast disparity of resources will virtually assure a one-
17 sided record.

18 So, I think, from our perspective, if delay is a problem,
19 it's because of primarily a resource issue and the idea that it isn't
20 fair either on a resource basis or the fact that -- I know I've had
21 cases where I brought an issue before the Appeal Board, a seismic issue,
22 the Appeal Board was going to hold an exploratory mini-hearing, the
23 Commission sua sponte shot it down, and I think what happened in the
24 resultant judicial review is it caused more delays there for the
25 licensee than if the Appeal Board had been allowed to go ahead.

It's a perception of maybe the system isn't necessarily
always fair to us, so delay is the best thing we can get.

SILBERG: Remember, in that case, we were not opposed to the
Appeal Board hearing.

HIATT: I know you weren't. You weren't the problem.

1 CAMERON: For once. Okay.

2 We're going to take a break in two minutes, and we'll come
3 back to all this, but I wanted to give Diane and Larry a chance to say
4 something before we break.

5 CURRAN: I guess the main point I wanted to make was the
6 issue of control by the presiding officer has come up today.

7 Tony raised it, and we're both talking about -- I think we
8 both have recent experience in mind on the same case in which it was the
9 intervenor's perception that the applicant got quite a few trips to the
10 well and so did the NRC staff, that if the record was considered
11 incomplete for purposes of rendering a decision on behalf of the
12 applicant, the presiding officer asked a number of questions, invited
13 the applicant or the staff to amend the record, and then of course,
14 based on this additional evidence, ruled for the applicant, and at
15 various times when the intervenors tried to do something similar, it was
16 ruled that we had not provided enough evidence to support our position.

17 So, there's certainly a perception that control, or lack
18 thereof -- it can be seen two different ways.

19 Tony, for the second time today, you were talking about
20 using risk to inform the level of procedural protections that are
21 provided to the public, and I just want to point out that, often, the
22 most hotly debated issue in the case is what is the level of risk to the
23 public posed by this particular project, and you know, it was our very
24 strong position that the particular project that we were both litigating
25 was more dangerous than the applicant thought, so that I would just ask
the agency to venture very, very carefully in that particular direction,
because it's very much based on the perception of the viewer.

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CAMERON: The issue of risk may be the central point in the
proceeding, actually. All right.

Larry, we'll give you the last word, and then we'll take a

1 break.

2 CHANDLER: Just a couple of quick observations, if I could.

3 Jill and Tony had alluded to difficulties and concerns
4 related to the inability to get into certain matters because they've
5 been generically resolved, and I would just point out and I'm sure Tony
6 appreciates that there is the opportunity to challenge the application
7 of specific regulations in specific cases.

8 It's an extremely high threshold. I don't know that it's
9 one that's ever been used successfully, candidly, but it's an
10 opportunity that is there. Rules can be challenged.

11 Then Tony and Tony made observations about participation
12 with the staff, participation at meetings between the staff and license
13 applicants, and just for perspective, I think Tony Thompson is right.

14 There are opportunities provided to members of the public to
15 attend meetings between the staff and applicants. At the same time, in
16 fairness, those meetings typically are open for observation and not for
17 full participation.

18 So, clearly, members of the public have an opportunity to be
19 there, to observe. I wouldn't say they're never afforded an opportunity
20 to ask questions, but it certainly is not a full participatory
21 opportunity, in fairness, to members of the public who might want to be
22 there.

23 The other thing that that raises, however, is a question of
24 notice and when notice of an opportunity for a hearing is provided, and
25 I guess Jim was only in maybe high school at the time, but Tony and I
remember, and maybe some others, when the Commission's regulations were
different.

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In fact, notice of opportunity was not given until the staff
reviews had been completed.

In fact, the criticism Tony leveled perhaps was justified at

1 that time because it was well recognized that the staff would have gone
2 through discussions with license applicants prior to a time in which
3 public involvement was afforded.

4 Those regulations were changed -- it was either '72 or '74
5 when the rules were restructured -- to provide for early notice, notices
6 provided very shortly after an application is received.

7 So, meetings then between the staff and applicants are
8 publicly noticed.

9 The public has an obligation to come in early in the
10 process, but they also have an opportunity early in the process to
11 observe and take from meetings with the applicants concerns that the
12 staff may have, as well as an opportunity early on to see the
13 application and supporting documentation.

14 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Larry. We are going to come back
15 to discuss these issues.

16 Ellen?

17 GINSBERG: Thanks.

18 At the risk of a little bit of repetition, I think it's
19 really important to articulate one of the industry's views on an issue
20 that's been bandied about here somewhat indirectly, and that is the
21 issue of this resolution of issues generically.

22 I think the industry thinks that there is a -- the agency
23 has long done this, there's efficiency, these are generic issues that
24 apply to licensees across the board, and there is a public participatory
25 opportunity when you go through the proceedings at the NRC, the Federal
Register notice, the opportunity for comment, etcetera, etcetera.

I do not want to -- we would not want to see the NRC somehow
use or view generic issues as an opportunity to be revisited.

I think case law is pretty clear here, first of all, but
second of all, generic issues are very appropriately evaluated and

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1 resolved generically, and the industry feels very strongly about that,
2 and that's an issue that's been back and forth here a little bit, and I
3 just wanted to put that on the record, and that's government-wide.

4 There's nothing unique about the NRC with respect to how it
5 handles rule-makings in the context of the notice and comment, etcetera,
6 etcetera.

7 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks.

8 Let's take a break till 10 to. That gives you about 20
9 minutes.

10 [Recess.]

11 CAMERON: I'd just like to remind everybody to try to speak
12 into the microphone, because people out here are having trouble hearing
13 you.

14 I want to give you a chance to come back and comment on some
15 of these things that we have discussed, but I wanted to ask Jay and
16 others about an issue that Jay had raised this morning when we first
17 began, and that was proceedings too long, which I'm distinguishing from
18 a problem that I put up that Susan raised, which was delay by
19 intervenor, underlying cause, perhaps biased decision-making.

20 We'll go back to explore that, but for example, I haven't
21 heard anybody say we shouldn't have cross-examination, all right, as we
22 look at the problems with the current process, and I've been told that
23 there may be some implications for cross-examination as an underlying of
24 proceedings too long, and this gets us into this case management issue
25 as a potential solution, perhaps, to be discussed, but I guess I just
wanted to make sure that we paid attention to this proceedings too long,
and I think the word was "interminable" that Jay used this morning, and
I guess I would just like to open that up for discussion, to see if
& people want to talk a little about what some of the underlying causes,
ASS perhaps, of these interminable proceedings are.
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1 Jay?

2 SILBERG: Case management, I think, you know, solves a lot
3 of problems.

4 Interminability in some cases has been because decisions go
5 unwritten or unissued, in some cases because discovery gets strung out
6 forever, in some cases because I think cross-examination becomes endless
7 and pointless, and there, I think, are cases where cross-examination is
8 not worth doing, in some types of issues, in some types of proceedings,
9 not necessarily across the board, although I think we can have
10 philosophical discussions on whether cross-examination is, indeed, the
11 engine of truth for scientific issues, and I think most writers,
12 scholars have said it shouldn't be and there ought to be other
13 mechanisms, Steve's experience to the contrary. I can say that since
14 he's not here.

15 But I think that is -- I think that is one of the issues on
16 schedules.

17 I think there are a variety of ways that that can be
18 managed. Case management is one. Generic issues -- I agree with the
19 latter part of the discussion before, that if we allow generic issues to
20 be resolved by rule-making and then put back on the table, I think we're
21 reversing 100 years of administrative law and Supreme Court case
22 precedent that I think is fairly well accepted by almost everybody, at
23 least, and I think, if -- in fact, one of my recommendations for the
24 permanent repository 15, 20 years ago was we ought to try -- the
25 Commission ought to try to set forth the criteria more precisely, and
through rule-making, in order to take those decisions not off the table
but to make them earlier, give people an opportunity to participate
early on, and then it becomes simply a matter of establishing whether
you fall within the parameters that have been established by the rule.

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I think there are a number of areas where that's being done

1 today.

2 In the Part 72 proceedings where people are now using the
3 certified spent fuel storage casks in the rule-makings that have granted
4 the certificates of compliance, I think that's been a very helpful
5 addition to the process.

6 People are not frozen out. The same people who are
7 proceeding, who are participating in our site-specific licensing case
8 are also participating in the generic license of the casks, and their
9 views are not being ignored or swept aside.

10 I think there are a variety of devices which ought to be
11 used. Some of them are now. Some of them should be used more. Some of
12 them aren't.

13 Tony's suggestion of a different kind of administrative
14 review process was a very interesting one, to let the intervenors come
15 in, to have everything totally transparent, they become a full party.
16 We might not even charge them license fees to participate.

17 But I might well be willing to consider that provided that,
18 when you get to the end of that process, that's the end of the process.

19 You don't have hearings, because all the issues have been
20 vetted in a, if you will, scientific, technical forum, everyone's had
21 their day in court in a scientific and technical court, rather than a
22 court of law, and we'll make the decisions that way.

23 That is, perhaps, more typical of the way technical
24 decisions are made by administrative agencies if you want to look at new
25 drug applications or FAA certifications or, you know, lots of other
issues.

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You don't have, you know, a public hearing before the FAA
before you issue a type certificate for the 747, and you don't have a
public hearing with intervenor funding before you approve some new drug.

Maybe that is worth exploring. I, for one, don't think,

1 though, that Tony and his clients would be willing to make that part of
2 the grand bargain, if you will, but I might well be willing to consider
3 it.

4 CAMERON: Okay.

5 SILBERG: I think that's beyond the scope of this discussion
6 a little bit.

7 CAMERON: Are there any other problems that we should get up
8 here before we go back and discuss these, and we can go from most
9 recent, since there seems to be some need to talk about that.

10 Jill?

11 ZAMEK: It was brought up earlier about neutral presiding
12 officers being a problem. Somebody else brought that up and I agree.

13 CAMERON: Good point. I mean that was a discussion we had.

14 SILBERG: Is the concern that the current ones are not or
15 some of them are not?

16 ZAMEK: Correct, or with the changes, that perhaps they
17 wouldn't be. So, it's just a concern that we make sure we have them.

18 CAMERON: Any other new problems that we want to put up here
19 before we go back?

20 RICCIO: Not really a problem, Chip, but I guess I want to
21 comment that we have already had a grand bargain, apparently, at least
22 according to Commissioner Bradford, to get to the process where we are
23 now, and now the industry wants to renege on that, the industry and the
24 agency wants to renege on that promise.

25 CAMERON: So that everybody understands what you're talking
 about -- and I'm not sure, at least, that the agency is saying that it
 wants to renege on anything. I don't know about the industry, but could
 you let people know what you're referring to?

 RICCIO: Okay.

 When we opened up this discussion this morning, I referred

1 to a comment by Commissioner Bradford that, in order to get the current
2 hearing rights that we currently enjoy, we had given away our rights to
3 local -- as a local regulation of radiological health and safety and
4 limits set forth in the Price Anderson Act. At least that was his
5 understanding of the grand bargain that was struck, and obviously, the
6 industry has a different perspective on that grand bargain.

7 SILBERG: First of all, Price Anderson was passed in 1957.
8 The Atomic Energy Act and Section 189 was passed in 1954. So, we've got
9 a three-year disconnect.

10 RICCIO: At any rate, basically we have little faith that
11 any grand bargain structure is going to put us in a better position to
12 defend our rights, and again, I hate to be drawing us back to the SRM,
13 but when I say the Commission wants to circumscribe our rights, I'm
14 talking about the SRM.

15 We're heading down a path that they've already, you know,
16 signed off on, the Commissioners all voted upon it. So, why should we
17 be talking about it as though it doesn't exist?

18 CAMERON: Jim, could you -- this has come up several times,
19 and there might be some different answers to what you're raising,
20 including even though there is an SRM, the Commission also in that SRM
21 asked for the staff to get early feedback from the affected interests.

22 That SRM is not necessarily written in stone, okay? The
23 Commission can change their mind based on what they heard. But when you
24 say that the SRM has set the scope here, is there a specific -- is there
25 -- I'm not sure that the direction was that specific.

RICCIO: I was referring to setting out both on a
legislative track as well as a rule-making track to basically change our
rights from -- you know, under formal to informal hearings. That's what
I'm talking about. Go ahead with option four, I think it was, in the
SECY paper.

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1 CAMERON: Joe and Larry, maybe you can address this, because
2 I never read option four as making a decision about whether formal
3 hearings should be eliminated, and I keep getting confused when you
4 bring this up, Jim, and I see where you're coming from now, and maybe we
5 should clarify this, because I don't think that it's as it might appear.

6 Joe?

7 GRAY: I think the option four was a -- is a proposal to
8 proceed administratively with an exploration of ways to improve and de-
9 formalize the agency's hearing processes and, at the same time, a
10 proposal to seek legislation that would make it clear that the agency
11 has the flexibility to de-formalize.

12 I guess we haven't read the Commission's SRM as a hard and
13 fast direction to come out any particular way but, rather, we've read it
14 as a direction to explore, do some of what we're doing right here, and
15 to come back to the Commission with a proposal as to how the hearing
16 processes might be improved.

17 It's possible the proposal would be something along the
18 lines of do nothing, but I think --

19 RICCIO: Wasn't that an option they already denied, though?
20 Wasn't it one of the other options?

21 CAMERON: I think this is an important point for people to
22 understand.

23 GRAY: At the outset, the Commission did not choose the "do
24 nothing" option. They basically said move forward, explore it, come
25 back with a proposal.

CAMERON: Which does not mean that the result has been
dictated yet at this point.

ROISMAN: With all due respect, Joe, before I talked about
dis-ingenuity. The Commission has made a decision that the General
Counsel's rather extreme view of the 30 years of history, 40 years of

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1 history of this agency are meaningless when it comes to adjudicatory
2 hearings.

3 That is the most fundamental question. The Commission
4 decided that. This statement says they decided that. This should,
5 arguably, be appealable, if it had been made public in the usual way.

6 So, it's disingenuous to tell us that this train has not
7 already left the station. All that's left is whether or not it's going
8 to run over everybody on the track or only some of the people on the
9 track, but this is a done deal.

10 And with all due respect, if you want us to participate in
11 this process in a meaningful way, please don't patronize us with this.

12 That statement that reads, "The rule-making should outline
13 the NRC's discretion and flexibility to determine the type of proceeding
14 for hearings" is a massive sea change in the Commission's position, in
15 our view, from what the Commission has stated and what Congress stated
16 when the temporary operating license statute was passed in 1972, and if
17 you look at the legislative history of that, which the General Counsel's
18 memo does not address, it makes crystal clear that adjudicatory hearing
19 rights are built into 189 and that they had to be continued in the
20 temporary operating license.

21 So, the Commission wasn't even made aware of that piece of
22 legislative history, but it's now made the decision, and the decision is
23 that all we're going to talk about is how much damage you're going to do
24 to the formal hearing process, not whether you're going to do damage to
25 it, and I think we just ought to be honest about that.

CAMERON: Tony, I think that there still is -- there may be
a legitimate misunderstanding here about that. I'm not sure that
they're being disingenuous about that, although it may appear to be that
& way.

Larry, do you want to add anything to what Joe said, because

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1 it's a fundamental point.

2 CHANDLER: I had earlier said that I would not look at this
3 as a pre-ordained course that we're embarked on, simply focused on how
4 best to abridge the rights of the public to participate.

5 I think the Commission has charged the General Counsel with
6 conducting, as Joe just said and I had said earlier, a reasonable,
7 realistic, and thorough examination of the current processes to see
8 where they could be improved, informalized where possible, to make the
9 process work better.

10 I think if you look -- and you say it's a colossal sea
11 change.

12 If you look back in the Commission's decision going back in
13 West Chicago, they recognized there the tremendous flexibility afforded
14 the Commission in defining its adjudicatory processes, and this is
15 carrying forward, really, on that kind of analysis.

16 ROISMAN: (A) That's one court. (B) If what you and Joe are
17 saying is true, then we would expect to see within a week a
18 clarification memo.

19 CHANDLER: I don't think one is necessary.

20 ROISMAN: Well, then I think we've got a problem. Because
21 if what you're saying is so, it's not what's said in there, and we can
22 look at the words. If that's what the Commission intended and there's
23 an honest misunderstanding, then let them say that.

24 We're not talking about a rule-making. We're talking about
25 a memorandum sent out by the Commissioners. It's not a complicated
thing to do if they agree with what you and Joe are articulating to us.

CAMERON: Okay. Well, that recommendation is on the record,
and I think there probably will be a summary of this meeting prepared
for the Commission, and perhaps that will be forthcoming.

I think we have the problems identified. Let's go back and

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1 talk about them, but let's take these cards that are up right now.

2 Alan, you haven't spoken too much with us today. Why don't
3 you tell us what's on your mind?

4 HEIFETZ: Well, I haven't spoken too much because I've been
5 listening, and I've been trying to understand what the concerns are
6 around the table.

7 It seems to me that, before we get hung up in the labels of
8 what's formal or informal, we ought to look at what is the problem with
9 the formal proceeding in the first place, and the one thing that I seem
10 to see agreement on is delay, the length of time that it takes.

11 I heard about a seven-year proceeding. Well, a seven-year
12 proceeding is not because of cross-examination of witnesses in those
13 cases.

14 So, it seems to me that you have to take a look at what
15 causes delay in proceedings, and proceedings have to be divided into
16 three segments -- the pre-hearing segment where you're doing your
17 application, your staff work, and getting prepared for the hearing; the
18 second is the hearing itself; and the third part is, after an initial
19 decision, whether it's by an individual judge or a board or whatever,
20 that decision then gets appealed.

21 In the usual course, in most agencies -- and again, I'm not
22 speaking about the NRC. I don't know what happens at the NRC, but let
23 me just tell you what happens everywhere else.

24 The greatest amount of delay that I have seen is from the
25 time an initial decision is rendered and the time a commission renders a
decision after the initial decision.

So, if that is a problem, then you have to start backwards
and say what can we reasonably do to get an appeal of a decision decided
& quickly?

What I see people talking about is also a cross-over between

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1 part two, the hearing, and appellate aspect, and that is when you're
2 talking about interlocutory appeals and you're talking about petitions
3 for re-hearing on motions or whatever.

4 Those are also very calculated to delay proceedings, and
5 perhaps you ought to look at limiting interlocutory appeals to -- the
6 most extraordinary questions of policy are those that present new
7 questions and not just another bite at the apple, and the same thing on
8 petitions for rehearing.

9 If you want case management, you want someone to listen to a
10 motion on the one side, a response on the other side, and then make a
11 decision, make a decision, then move on with the proceeding.

12 If the decision is a bad one and is error, it can always be
13 appealed later, but this idea of trying to appeal everything piecemeal
14 is something else that just delays and delays and delays.

15 Better to have a decision that's out there that you don't
16 like and take a chance on appealing it and getting it reversed later on
17 and see what the relief has to be rather than saying we've got to
18 correct this thing now.

19 So, those are suggestions that I would have there.

20 The hearing process itself, the presiding officer does have
21 to control the proceeding, whether it's an oral hearing or a paper flow
22 hearing, and there are ways to do that.

23 Paul teaches a course in complex case management out at the
24 Judicial College. I took that course out there before Paul arrived, and
25 it was given by Federal District Court Judge Fred Lacey, who knew how to
rocket docket before the rocket docket was invented, and there are ways
to get people to do things quickly and still guarantee due process
rights.

One of the things that he had suggested and that used to be
done all the time at some of the other regulatory agencies was to get

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1 all expert testimony in writing, direct testimony. The only oral
2 examination of an expert witness would be cross-examination.

3 There's no reason to put an expert on the stand and to have
4 that expert give direct testimony orally. Who wants to sit there and
5 listen to his qualifications and all of this stuff? Put it in paper,
6 and if there's any controversy, let somebody examine on it.

7 If you put his testimony in writing, then you get -- there
8 are two advantages.

9 From the sponsor's perspective, the testimony can be ordered
10 beautifully and set out as best as you can possibly set it out. You
11 don't take the chance of having an expert getting up on the stand and
12 fumbling his testimony. So, that's from the sponsor's point of view.

13 From the cross-examining point of view, you get the
14 testimony in advance of the hearing. You get a chance to let your
15 expert look at it and analyze it and come up with a pointed cross-
16 examination that does away with trying to think on your feet while
17 you're there, but you're prepared to do it.

18 The only direct testimony you need for the expert witness in
19 that case is you put him on the stand, you have him introduce himself,
20 you give him his testimony, you say is this your testimony, he says yes.
21 Do you have any minor corrections to make? There's a typographical
22 error on page 32, it's a period. Anything else? No. I tender the
23 witness for cross-examination. That does away with a tremendous amount
24 of time.

25 So, there are ways of doing that.

If you start to look at these ways of speeding up the
hearing process, then what becomes a formal proceeding -- it's a formal
proceeding, but it's a fast formal proceeding.

So, you're not concerned about saying, oh, get out of this
formal proceeding, we've got to get to something informal. Well,

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1 something informal, depending on the way it can be structured, can be
2 much slower than the formal proceeding.

3 The best cases that I ever presided over were ones where
4 rules were practically nonexistent and I was able to sit down with the
5 attorneys in a case and we prescribed a whole series of discovery
6 functions and timing, motions practice and everything, and got the cases
7 done in a very, very short period of time.

8 In regulatory reform, you can go from one extreme to
9 another. I have a device that will give you the fastest decision in the
10 world on any kind of a case, regardless. It's in my pocket, and it's
11 called a coin.

12 Now, that's fast decision-making. It's not necessarily good
13 decision-making, but if you want it fast, you can get it that way.

14 You can also get it much more slowly, and you can go to a
15 seven-year or a 12-year kind of scenario, but it is possible to conduct
16 adversary adjudications within shorter time-frames and do it with all
17 due process protections as long as you can come up with an agreement on
18 how long should it take to do admissions, how long should it take to do
19 interrogatories?

20 If you're going to do any kind of depositions, look to this
21 prospect of saying that a deposition can only be one day, seven hours.
22 Is that a possibility? How many witnesses?

23 If you look at it that way and you try to telescope down the
24 time periods, you can have a full panoply of due process rights without
25 stretching these cases beyond what is reasonable, and I think that's
where your focus ought to be.

CAMERON: Okay. Thanks a lot, Alan. I think tomorrow we'll
examine how we might make that work here and which of these problems
that's going to address. The Commission does have a policy statement
out of sorts on case management. It would be interesting to hear a

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1 discussion about the different perspectives on how well we're doing on
2 case management and what do you do to make that better, and does that
3 solve the types of problems that people are concerned about and that the
4 Commission might be concerned about?

5 Let's hear what Bob has to say.

6 BACKUS: It's interesting we're talking about delay, because
7 I don't know how that got injected into here, but this is an example of
8 where we need the case study that Tony was talking about. You have to
9 look at, really, what was the delay.

10 Diane was telling me that, you know, the uranium enrichment
11 thing down in Louisiana is often cited, and there were several years
12 when the applicant abandoned the project that's not acknowledged when
13 they talk about how long the proceeding took, and I could certainly
14 explain the so-called delay on the Seabrook thing by numerous Commission
15 interventions in the proceeding.

16 So, I think we need that case study to see whether delay is
17 a real problem or just a handy thing that the politicians latch onto to
18 castigate this agency, because all they see is the number of months or
19 number of years it took from application to decision, and you need to
20 know what's behind that.

21 I had a couple of other problems I was going to discuss,
22 just let you list.

23 One is standing. As I was saying during the break to my
24 friends here on my right, I don't think we should let standing become a
25 big issue and spend a lot of time on it. I think we should let people
in that want to get in, like you do, certainly, in our state court, with
very broad standing, very liberal standing requirements.

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Everybody has a great concern that ne'r do wells will come
in and screw up the process. I don't think that really happens.
Litigation isn't bean-bag. It's hard work. It takes a lot of effort.

1 It takes a lot of money, which most people don't have.

2 I don't think you're going to get people in if they don't
3 have a genuine and legitimate concern, and if you do, that's what your
4 presiding officer is there for, and he's got tons of authority under
5 your CFR to handle non-productive participation, tons of authority that
6 can be exercised.

7 So, instead of having all these fights over standing, I
8 would let them in.

9 Same with the contention issue. I think we should go back
10 to what the Commission said originally was the standard for contention.
11 It was noticed pleading like you had in the Federal court. You know,
12 the other driver negligently turned and ran into me and caused me
13 injury, in violation of the rules of the road. Okay, you're in. Later
14 on, you have to specify what that's all about.

15 But I would say let people in, open up the process, insist
16 that meaningful discovery be done, and then you'll cut down on the
17 cross-examination, which I agree with Steve we certainly can't forego,
18 because it is the best engine for the discovery of truth, as Dean
19 Wigmore once wrote.

20 End of speech.

21 CAMERON: Thanks, Bob.

22 Susan.

23 HIATT: I'll just pick up on a few points that have been
24 made.

25 First, with regard to what Judge Heifetz talked about, the
pre-filed written direct testimony, I would note we already do that
under our rules of practice. So, it's already there.

Talking about interlocutory appeals, this is another case
where the rules can work both ways. I recall in the Perry case where
Jay filed a number of interlocutory appeals in the form of motions for

1 directed certification to the Appeal Board. They were not particularly
2 effective.

3 [Laughter.]

4 HIATT: Going back to this idea of this bargain that former
5 Commissioner Bradford talked about, I recall seeing a NUREG that
6 documented a process somewhat similar to this back in June of 1978, I
7 know Tony was a participant in, and I believe it was Gerald Charnoff of
8 Jay's law firm, was also a participant, and he made, remarkably, the
9 same statement, that this was a trade-off between Price Anderson and
10 hearing rights, that this bargain had already been struck back in the
11 '50s, and that's documented. Maybe it wasn't documented correctly, but
12 I have that NUREG, and it's in there.

13 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Susan.

14 Mal.

15 MURPHY: Some of you may wonder why I'm sitting here
16 silently and not bringing up any problems.

17 I'm sort of limiting my participation in this effort to how
18 it will impact the high-level waste repository, because my experience
19 with other nuclear licensing is so old and musty that I don't want to
20 embarrass myself by bringing it up, but I'm sitting here listening to
21 the various problems that people are throwing out on the table,
22 beginning with Tony Roisman, and realizing that most -- certainly not
23 all, and some of the ones that Tony mentioned, definitely not, but many
24 of the problems that people are mentioning with respect to the hearing
25 process don't pertain to the high-level waste process as the pre-
licensing proceedings, at least, because the potential intervenors, the
state, the local governments, and the public itself is already afforded
those same rights that people are sitting here talking about being
granted in any changed hearing procedure.

But our process is so unique that I'm not certain that it

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1 translates easily to other licensing proceedings that the NRC might be
2 engaged in.

3 For example, we have a statutory site characterization
4 process where Congress has mandated certain interactions, certain
5 cooperation between Federal agencies, etcetera. It's been going on for
6 17, 18 years now.

7 There have been dozens, probably hundreds of informal
8 meetings between the NRC staff and DOE, technical exchanges, as we call
9 them, between the NRC staff and DOE, Appendix 7 meetings, which are
10 another kind of even less formal interchange between DOE and the NRC,
11 and all of those meetings are open to the public.

12 We attend them. We have an on-site representative
13 designated who has an office in the DOE offices in Las Vegas, who has
14 another office available to him out at the -- out at what's called the
15 Field Operations Center, next to Yucca Mountain itself.

16 There's daily contact with the Department of Energy, with
17 the NRC on-site representatives, whose office suite is next -- you know,
18 almost adjacent to the Nye County office suite in the Department of
19 Energy building.

20 The members of the public can attend any of those meetings,
21 and do. Judy Trikle, who represents the Nevada Nuclear Waste Task
22 Force, a public citizen's group, is at virtually every single meeting.
23 Citizen's Alert attends some. NRDC could attend if they wanted to.
24 Anybody could attend if they wanted to.

25 So, many of the things that you're bringing up as concerns
and problems that tend to slow down the hearing process, because public
interest groups or public citizens or intervenors or however you want to
designate them have this tremendous job of catching up once the license
& application is filed, don't necessarily apply in our case.

The other major difference -- and you might -- those of you

1 who are on the table who aren't familiar with it might take a look at
2 this evening, and we could talk about it tomorrow, I guess -- is sub-
3 part J, which itself, in a sense, constitutes a grand bargain.

4 It was a large grand compromise that Jay Silberg and I can
5 take some personal credit for crafting in which all sides, for the only
6 time in the high-level waste process, at least, gave up something in
7 exchange for something else that they thought was in their interest.

8 DOE, the NRC, the State of Nevada, the local governments,
9 the environmental groups, all with differing interests in the program,
10 were able to fashion a compromise which produced the original sub-part
11 J, the so-called licensing support system rules.

12 They have since been added to and subsequently amended to
13 change the licensing support system from a stand-alone, monolithic,
14 huge, very expensive system to a web-based document exchange system, but
15 assuming that thing is going to work -- and I remain confident that it
16 will -- we're not going to worry about discovery, document discovery,
17 because everybody who intends to participate in the hearing, in the
18 licensing process, as a pre-condition to that participation, is going to
19 be required to post all of their relevant documents and documents which
20 are likely to lead to the discovery of relevant evidence, of admissible
21 evidence, on a web-site and make them available over the internet.

22 Nye County is in the process of upgrading our web-site right
23 now. The Department of Energy, which has a massive problem, because
24 they've got hundreds of thousands of documents to deal with, has been
25 working on it for years.

So, a lot of these problems, you know, aren't going to exist
in the context of the high-level waste licensing proceeding because of
the tremendously long lead times involved and the fact that the public,
through their representatives, has been able to participate so
extensively throughout the process, and it may be, rather than throwing

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1 the baby out with the bath-water -- and I don't like to use the words
2 again, but I guess I have to, in talking about going from an informal --
3 and there are some licensing cases today, obviously, wherein formal
4 rules are perfectly valid, but rather than going from a formal to a more
5 informal rule-making model, it may be useful to take a look at what's
6 been happening for years in the high-level waste -- in the Yucca
7 Mountain program to see if there isn't some way that the public can't
8 get involved in this process at the outset.

9 We don't get internal staff memoranda. We don't get
10 dissenting opinions routinely. We don't get invited to meetings where
11 two Department of Energy scientists are beating on each other or where
12 the NRC is questioning the work done by its own Center for Nuclear Waste
13 Regulatory Analysis, etcetera, and I'm not sure that any process we
14 could fashion would ever go that far, and I'm not sure it's desirable to
15 do so in the first place.

16 But short of those kind of things, I already enjoy all of
17 the things that most of you have identified as concerns. Sorry, but
18 that's just the way it is.

19 [Laughter.]

20 MURPHY: This also, of course, excludes the, to many of you,
21 I know, very critical issue of funding. We are funded. We're funded
22 directly by an appropriation from Congress out of the nuclear waste
23 fund.

24 We're certainly not funded as well as we ought to be, you
25 know, and it certainly inhibits, and it's going to limit the kind of
issues we'll be able to deal with in licensing, and it's forced us to
prioritize what things are really truly important to the Nye County
program and which ones aren't, but we do have money available to allow
& us to participate in the program.

All of these other things that I've been talking about, of

1 course, presuppose that from somewhere, either utility funding, funding
2 from Congress, or bake sales, the traditional method of funding
3 intervenors, that somehow there's a few dollars available to do this.

4 CAMERON: And I would just note, before I go to Jay -- I
5 think you want to amplify on some of Mal's remarks -- that although the
6 government entities might be receiving funding, the citizen group
7 community is still in the same --

8 MURPHY: They were at one time. The Nevada Nuclear Waste
9 Task Force received a grant from the State of Nevada's Nuclear Waste
10 Policy Office. That is no longer the case for a couple of reasons.

11 The principle citizens group which is actively involved in
12 the Yucca Mountain program right now has raised its own money. They
13 have no outside source of funds, and they have no program source of
14 funds whatsoever.

15 CAMERON: Okay.

16 Jay, do you want to just tie on to Mal's sub-part J, and
17 then we'll go to Diane and then down to Tony?

18 SILBERG: I was actually going to expand on that a little
19 bit. The repository process is not the only one in which the bells and
20 whistles are available. In fact, in our current EFS case, we have put
21 on the record every document, you know, that we have.

22 The entire four-volume calculation package was made
23 available a month after the application was filed and several months
24 before contentions were due to be filed.

25 The meetings are all open. In fact, our problem is that we
can't have meetings with the staff on a as-needed basis, because we have
to have this two weeks pre-notice. So, by the time we need to get
something done, it's too late if we give the notice, you know, that the
staff is insisting on.

So, actually, it's getting in the way of interactions

1 between the applicants and the staff, but it is and has been from the
2 beginning a very, very transparent process.

3 We have an open document discovery where all relevant
4 documents on both sides have been made available from the very
5 beginning, courtesy of Judge Bollwerk, and we have a massive document
6 room out in Salt Lake City that is free and open roaming for the
7 intervenors out there.

8 Most of those don't have a funding problem because the State
9 of Utah has a much larger budget than I think we have as the applicants
10 and maybe more than the staff has, and I think that's probably more true
11 today in reactor cases, as well.

12 Certainly, in the Baltimore Gas license renewal case, there
13 were tens, maybe hundreds of meetings that were open to the public years
14 before the application was put on file.

15 Sections of the application in draft form were made
16 available to the public, put in the public document room.

17 This was an extremely open process, and I think to say that,
18 you know, you get involved in the marathon in mile 25 and you've got to
19 catch up, I think, is overstating it quite a bit.

20 There's, from our standpoint, probably more openness than is
21 good for the technical review right now because it gets in the way of
22 the interaction rather than assist the interaction.

23 MURPHY: Some of these in the Yucca Mountain -- talk about
24 transparency -- for some of these meetings -- and I don't mean the
25 public meetings of the ACNW or the meeting that you're going to be
facilitating next Tuesday, for example, Chip, but for some of the
informal interactions between the staff of the NRC, the staff of DOE,
etcetera, we have members of the press there.

I've been to meetings in which television cameras were
present in the room when people were hassling out whether or not some,

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1 you know, section of the total system performance assessment was based
2 on adequate modeling.

3 It's an extremely transparent, open program, and like I say,
4 because of the unique nature of that, I don't know that translate all of
5 them to any other licensing proceeding, but it seems to me you can
6 transfer quite a bit of it.

7 CAMERON: Okay.

8 Tony brought up this morning -- and Bob just referred to it
9 -- this aspect of doing a careful evaluation of existing cases to see
10 exactly what works and what doesn't, and Bob tied it to delay.

11 That's a solution in terms of trying to address this
12 problem.

13 I think that the things that Mal said and Jay said and Judge
14 Heifetz are starting to get us to potential solutions for the problems.

15 In the case of sub-part J or the private fuel storage, there
16 may be lessons learned right within the NRC framework at this point that
17 could be more carefully explored or taken advantage of it.

18 MURPHY: Let me just say one word about standing, too,
19 before I forget about it, because I want to help out my friend, Jay
20 Silberg here.

21 We talk about standing in the context of the environmental
22 and citizens groups being denied access to this process from time to
23 time, and I've always considered it somewhat preposterous, for example,
24 that under -- things may have changed in the last 10 years since we
25 first started talking about this, you remember, Jay, in the LSS
negotiations, but at that time, at least, the NRC took the position that
the utilities themselves, which were funding almost the entire high-
level nuclear waste process, would not have standing to participate in
the licensing proceeding, because interest had to be something other
than financial or economic interest, even though you were paying the --

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1 like I say, except for the defense waste -- the entire freight.

2 So, if we're going to liberalize standing rules, which I
3 absolutely support, Bob, we ought to liberalize them to the extent that
4 Jay Silberg's clients can get in the door, too, just out of a sense of
5 fundamental fairness.

6 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Mal.

7 Diane.

8 CURRAN: A minute ago, Chip, you made a general reference to
9 these problems, and I think my big problem is that I don't know what the
10 problem is.

11 When I read this staff requirements memo, I took it as
12 basically a declaration of the death knell of the formal hearing process
13 for NRC adjudications, and I still don't know why, and you know, we've
14 had a really interesting discussion here today, and we have put some
15 good things on the board, but I still don't know why, and I am guessing
16 that this comes out of a process that started summer before this past
17 summer, after the LES withdrew its license application and Chairman
18 Jackson was called on the carpet before some members of the Congress and
19 basically read the riot act, and then, shortly after that, I was in the
20 middle of a proceeding where we got an extremely, extremely tight and
21 draconian schedule and were told by the presiding officer I can't help
22 it, I have been ordered by the Commission that we have to clamp down on
23 license proceeding schedules.

24 I am guessing that this is just another reaction to that
25 kind of political pressure, because it doesn't reflect any kind of
reasoning by the Commission.

We're concerned about X, Y, or Z, and therefore, we're doing
A, but we want to go from formal to informal hearings, and I would just
really urge the Office of General Counsel, when you're dealing with
this, go back through the Commission -- I know this has been said

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1 before, but go back through the Commission and ask what is the problem,
2 what do you want us to look at, and don't take this discussion today as
3 the homework that needs to be done.

4 A great deal more -- first of all, the issues have to be
5 clarified, and then a great deal of work has to be done. We have a
6 process that's been going on for many, many years, and a very vague
7 proposal to completely change it.

8 CAMERON: If anything, this discussion today might only
9 demonstrate that there is not a wholesale problem with the formal
10 hearing process that needs to be fixed by going informal, and the staff
11 is going to communicate with the Commission about the perception that's
12 presented by the SRM, and I think that we need to do a better job of
13 explaining that.

14 The only way that I can explain it -- and perhaps Joe and
15 Larry can think about this overnight and we can try to do a better job
16 of it this morning -- is that the so-called legislative solution or
17 legislative option is independent of any policy-based conclusion that
18 the Commission has reached that the formal process should be changed in
19 a wholesale way, and that may be hard to glean from reading that, but I
20 think that that might be the intent.

21 But I don't want people to -- I mean we can -- one solution
22 to this is to go to the Commission for clarification, as Tony suggested
23 and you're suggesting, but I would like to hope -- I would like to think
24 that we could perhaps provide some clarification on this before the
25 meeting adjourns tomorrow, but we'll have to see if we can do that, and
I think that we understand -- the staff understands what your concern
is.

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CURRAN: That's quite a major undertaking to get legislation
passed just so you can keep it in your back pocket.

CAMERON: All right.

1 Tony?

2 THOMPSON: I think that we ought to recognize something here
3 that we haven't brought up today, and that is that it is not only -- the
4 delays involved are not only the result of the hearing process.

5 They are frequently part and parcel of the licensing process
6 itself that goes on and on and on and on either because there maybe
7 aren't the resources or people don't want to face up to the problems,
8 whatever it is.

9 So, it isn't just the hearing process. Sometimes, when the
10 hearing process becomes ponderous and is tacked on to the tail-end of a
11 ponderous licensing process that you get a problem, and then to have
12 somebody come in at the last moment and say, well, now, I want to redo
13 the whole thing, I want to re-look the whole thing, it seems to me
14 that's unreasonable.

15 I think, you know, if you, for example, in the relicensing
16 of reactors context, know which reactors are going to be applying to
17 relicense and the information is public, then if you're interested in
18 it, you ought to go and get involved, but don't get involved three years
19 after the -- or four or five years after the licensing process has gone
20 its whole self, there's been an ER or EIS or whatever it is, and then
21 say in the hearing we've got to go back and redo this.

22 That's not fair, and that's not appropriate, and there's no
23 excuse for it, frankly.

24 If you're interested in it, then you need to get in it from
25 the beginning, as far as I'm concerned.

Now, one of the things I know in NMSS did here recently was
to set up completeness reviews so that when a license amendment comes in
or a license application comes in, within 90 days they will tell you
whether it's complete enough to go forward or -- it doesn't mean it's
absolutely complete, but it's complete enough to go forward, so that you

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1 don't wind up, three years down the road, with the staff saying this is
2 incomplete.

3 So, there are probably things that the staff can do in the
4 licensing context that are just as important as looking at problems with
5 the hearing process.

6 I commend to your attention the Court of Appeals decision in
7 the Enviro-Care versus Quivira and International Uranium Corporation
8 case. This came down here, I guess, last week. Two important things in
9 that.

10 It has to do with standing, and it basically upholds the
11 Commission's position that a competitor who's really only alleging the
12 fact that the license amendment granted to the license applicant or
13 amendment applicant -- the only complaint is that this will injure, in
14 this case, Enviro-Care's competitive status is not a basis for standing.

15 The Commission held this in two cases, and it even then goes
16 on a little further. The Commission said we're not going to allow a
17 competitor, for example, to come in and abuse our hearing processes and
18 our regulatory processes for their own personal reasons.

19 The other important thing that this case says and which
20 Professor Lubbers, I'm sure, will be interested in is that, when the
21 Commission makes a decision about its hearing processes, including the
22 issue of standing, it isn't an Article III court, it is interpreting the
23 Atomic Energy Act, it gets Chevron protection.

24 If the statute is ambiguous and the Commission's position is
25 reasonable, the Commission's decision gets Chevron protection.

If the Commission were operating under the Administrative
Procedures Act, it would not get Chevron discretion, because that's a
statute that's applicable across the board to agencies.

So, it is directly relevant to the issues that we've been
discussing today.

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1 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Tony.

2 Let's go to Joe and then George and to Ellen and then come
3 back to Tony.

4 Joe?

5 GRAY: Just a couple of clarifications, I guess, and I'm not
6 going to talk about the SRM.

7 Chip, you asked about cross-examination and protracted
8 cross-examination and the effects of that. I have not heard for the
9 last 13 or 14 years complaints about protracted cross-examination.

10 In fact, since sometime in the early '80s, when the
11 Commission put out one of its earlier policy statements on adjudications
12 where they suggested that plans should be used, I think the licensing
13 boards have been fairly astute at controlling cross-examination, and if
14 it's not controlled by the board itself, the parties have the
15 opportunity to control it by the various objections that are available.

16 So, the law I know, at least, any assertion that cross-
17 examination is a problem is not supportable.

18 CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Joe.

19 GRAY: Just a clarification on a couple of other points made
20 somewhere along the way here.

21 As an independent agency, we do not have to submit
22 legislative proposals to OMB except those that concern our budget. So,
23 legislative proposals directed to hearing requirements would not have to
24 go to OMB.

25 We do have a statutory bar on intervenor funding, and if
there is a proposal to consider intervenor funding, we would
legislatively have to do something.

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Finally, I guess I had a question about -- one of the
problems or concerns that have been put up on the sheets there was a
concern about eliminating issues by rule-making, and I guess, to the

1 extent that you can give some clarification on the basis for that
2 concern, it would be helpful, I think.

3 I note, for example, that the rules that set out standards
4 and whatnot are intended generally to resolve problems generically,
5 applicable to all licensees and applicants, and I guess, if -- I just
6 don't see what problem there is with a generic resolution.

7 Our rules of practice also provide for waiving a rule or
8 setting aside a rule in an individual case if it can be shown that the
9 rule doesn't apply in the particular circumstances.

10 That is available, admittedly a high standard, but it is
11 there for those cases where the rules, particular substantive rules
12 really can be shown not to apply in that particular case.

13 So I guess I'm sort of at a loss for the reason why
14 resolution through rule-making is --

15 CAMERON: What I would like to do is to ask Jim and Jill and
16 Tony to perhaps address that tomorrow when we get to that particular
17 problem, okay, so that we can give some other people time to finish up
18 here tonight, but I think that some further explanation is needed about
19 whether that's always a problem or whether that is only a problem in
20 particular circumstances, the way that it's used.

21 Let's go to George now and then Ellen.

22 EDGAR: I want to make sure that at least my view is
23 understood, that I think there are a number of things that need to be
24 done to fix the process. I think it's a process that does have within
25 it considerably uncertainty, lots of unpredictability.

There are some very positive improvements out there that I
think should be considered for codification.

In the case management area, many of the things that the
Judge talked about are in place already. I think, in particular,
though, the Commission policy statement on adjudications has had its

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1 effect. It has imposed a discipline on hearing milestones.

2 I think, also, the notion of active Commission oversight,
3 Commission intervention in the process is an important feature of
4 control, and it's an important feature for the Commission to make sure
5 that its policies are understood. That should continue.

6 Historically, if you look for the largest single cause of
7 licensing delays and trace the critical path through most of the cases,
8 you'll find that a good deal of that critical path is tied up with the
9 staff milestone documents, the FES, the SER, and whatnot.

10 That seems to be an area, to me, that's under significantly
11 improved control. The staff's performance in the license transfer area
12 and on renewal are both extremely positive.

13 I think the notion of contention thresholds, particularly
14 with the current rules, are good, that they should continue.

15 One area of weakness and uncertainty historically which I
16 think ties into the purpose that you ascribe the hearing is the sua
17 sponte authority of the licensing board. I would eliminate it entirely.

18 It is circumscribed already, and it does require Commission
19 review, but if the purpose is essentially dispute resolution, then you
20 don't need sua sponte, shouldn't have it, and I would suggest that the
21 purpose of the hearings should not be educational, it should be simply
22 dispute resolution.

23 Time for decisions -- I think there is an area where,
24 historically, there has been a question-mark. None of us have quite
25 found the time-line for a decision to be predictable.

I think, generally speaking, there's a recognition of that,
but that's an area where I suppose all we have now is some sensitivity
that's been borne out of some of the cases.

In terms of cross examination, I'm well aware of cases where
I think it's been excessive and non-productive. It is certainly not

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1 true in all cases.

2 There are many types of cases -- and I think that's on the
3 agenda for tomorrow -- where cross-examination is an important engine
4 for finding the truth, if you will, particularly cases such as
5 individual enforcement, where the question of an individual's conduct
6 might be at issue.

7 In terms of scientific exchange, I'd have to say that I'd
8 align with Jay on that, that that's not an area where cross-examination
9 is always productive. I would not start with a presumption that, on
10 scientific issues, you would have it.

11 I would exchange testimony, I would look for conflicts, and
12 I would give the boards the authority to order cross-examination on very
13 specific areas if that were to aid in the decision.

14 The staff role has always been a subject of some discussion.
15 The staff is the ultimate licensing authority. They are delegated the
16 authority to issue the license. The licensing board's hearing would
17 modify the -- or the licensing board decision would modify the staff
18 license decision, but it would seem to me there shouldn't be a
19 presumption that the staff would have to be a party to the hearing, that
20 the staff could have the discretion as to whether or not they'd
21 participate.

22 Where there is an issue in which they have a stake, an
23 issue, then certainly they should be allowed to participate, but
24 otherwise, I wouldn't establish the presumption.

25 The final thought is that, when I look at the question of
public participation -- Jay mentioned a number of instances of recent
experience where other forms of public participation than the hearing
process have been effective. I can think of a number of areas.

 The Commission's open meeting policy has been in place for
some time, it is observed.

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1 I think Millstone restart is a good example of a situation
2 where the staff opened up the process, local public meetings, a whole
3 series of Commission meetings.

4 The Union of Concerned Scientists letter was, I thought,
5 well taken. It simply said I don't agree with the decision to restart,
6 but you gave me the opportunity to be heard, and so, there is a positive
7 endorsement of the process.

8 I think we've been through several ugly, hotly contested
9 licensing cases that, at least two, we've been able to settle, provide
10 intervenors with access to information that really has to do not so much
11 with whether or not the facility should be licensed but how the facility
12 should be licensed, under what conditions and what the state of
13 compliance is.

14 We spent the better part of three years with an intervenor
15 group at one site, working with them, not always agreeing with them, but
16 at least giving them access to information so that they could assess the
17 level of compliance, in exchange for which they gave up their hearing
18 rights, but I think if you talk to them about it, they would tell you
19 that they got more out of that access to information than they got out
20 of hearing participation.

21 I can't speak for them, but I have discussed it with them.

22 So, when I look at this picture, I think we've still got a
23 way to go to improve this hearing process. I wouldn't stop here.

24 I don't know whether "wholesale" is the right term but
25 certainly it needs to be looked at carefully, and it needs to be looked
at in a way that does not assume that this process should remain as it
is.

CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, George.

I think people -- although you can't speak for that
particular group, people might be interested tomorrow, when we talk

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1 about potential solutions, you know, in a description of what particular
2 process that you're talking about.

3 EDGAR: Sure.

4 CAMERON: Ellen?

5 GINSBERG: Thanks.

6 I just wanted to put on the table, in response to what Diane
7 has said, you know, this looks like an -- you indicated that this looks
8 like an activity in search of a problem, and I think the industry's
9 position is that putting it that way may not be accurate, but there are
10 certainly improvements that should be made to this process and that
11 there are improvements available that could assist in many different
12 productive ways.

13 We are not satisfied with the process as it is. We think
14 there are improvements. We will be encouraging the NRC to make those
15 improvements.

16 Some of the ones that George just identified, some of the
17 other ideas, models -- sub-part J, sub-part M might be another model --
18 we think are very applicable to other proceedings than just those for
19 which they are currently being used.

20 So, to crispen a response, I wanted to be clear that the
21 industry does think there's a need to not only re-look but to make
22 potentially significant improvements to the process.

23 CAMERON: Okay. Thanks, Ellen.

24 Tony?

25 ROISMAN: Two things.

Number one, when we talk tomorrow, I think one of the things
that we ought to think about is solutions that do not involve the
Commission, because that's what George is talking about.

He's talking about the utility and the interested party,
intervenor, working out a deal, and maybe the laboratory that now exists

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1 from experience up until now is a spotty laboratory, it doesn't have
2 good -- everybody's been talking about good science. It certainly
3 doesn't have good science.

4 But let's just take -- just give you some hypotheticals.

5 You have a licensing hearing coming up. You've got a
6 utility that says, boy, I'd really like to get this thing decided fast,
7 and what I'd like to do is I'll go find who the interested intervenor
8 groups are, I will fund them in exchange for what I want to bargain for.

9 I will give them the money necessary to do what they think
10 they need to do to convince themselves either that this is okay or to
11 convince themselves there are problems that they want to air and to go
12 out and get them aired in whatever way, and then, I, the utility, want
13 something back. So, there would be an intervenor funding option.

14 Another option would be George's proposal. We will give you
15 complete access inside the plant and inside the company to how things
16 are going on, you'll be part of our internal decision-making, and you'll
17 have some voice in all of that, and in exchange for that, you give up
18 all hearing rights.

19 Here's another model. Okay. Let's try that.

20 I think the thing that would be really a disaster is to have
21 the Commission start -- first of all, you buy yourself a lawsuit, you
22 buy yourself a long delay, so no one's really going to benefit from
23 that.

24 If the Commission, particularly on the basis of the
25 available record, goes out and follows this SRM along the lines of
laying out a little tool box of weapons that it can draw on whenever it
feels like it wants to fore-shorten intervenor rights, it's going to
just find itself tied up in nothing but litigation. Doesn't make sense
& to me.

It makes much more sense -- I'm a believer in negotiation,

1 not litigation. You would think, based on my career, that I don't
2 follow that. I've just had the unfortunate result of always running
3 into people who believed in litigation instead of negotiation; they
4 closed off the options.

5 For purposes of tomorrow, I think one of the things we ought
6 to put on the table is a set of options that we could try in the
7 laboratory without doing anything with the Commission at all.

8 That's number one.

9 Number two --

10 EDGAR: Your choice of opponents is bad.

11 ROISMAN: Well, we've finally got some decent opponents.
12 Took a while. We had to drive a few other law firms, but we got to some
13 people we could talk to.

14 But I want to talk about some practical considerations,
15 because I think there is one thing -- and this is certainly a case of
16 I'm the blind scientist and I put my hand on the elephant and I think it
17 looks like a long, thin tube.

18 That's my picture of the elephant. Maybe the elephant
19 really looks very different than that.

20 But in my experience, most of the things that utilities are
21 upset about, legitimately upset about in terms of delay, have to do with
22 the efforts of intervenor groups to do the best they can with what
23 they've got. Let's take cross-examination as an example.

24 I certainly confess -- if this were an AA meeting, I would
25 stand up and say hi, I'm Tony, I'm a cross-examine abuser, and the truth
of the matter is that we don't do that because we love it or because we
even think it's a very good way to get information. We do it because
it's all we've got.

Nobody in their right mind would want to spend all that
amount of time doing cross-examination, but you don't have to spend any

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1 money, except your presence, to do that. To take a deposition, you have
2 to spend a great deal more money.

3 You have to go there, you have to order a transcript, you
4 may even have to pay for the witness to come if the other side really
5 wants to be tough about it, etcetera, etcetera.

6 Interrogatories -- I can tell you I have spent weeks writing
7 interrogatories until my hand fell off. Why would I spend that much
8 time writing interrogatory? Because I couldn't afford to do a
9 deposition, and I didn't want to wait for the hearing to find out the
10 answer to the question.

11 So, I would write thousands of interrogatories, hoping that
12 maybe somewhere somebody would answer it without talking to their lawyer
13 first and I'd actually find out something, but it was the only tool that
14 I had.

15 I think that is the reality of what happens in this
16 licensing process.

17 Now, I know that the Congress of the United States has
18 forbidden the Commission to intervenor funding, and I don't think any of
19 the solutions that are coming from the intervenor side of the table are
20 possible here unless and until we bring to the table, if you really want
21 to have a negotiated rule-making, so to speak, as opposed to an imposed
22 rule-making, the relevant congressional people and they sign on.

23 If they don't sign on, there's no deal, there's nothing,
24 because yes, they can stop it, and they've already stopped it, but I
25 feel that the underlying problem is that it's hard for you -- and the
problem that I think Tony mentioned where they kept giving the
intervenor another change and giving the intervenor another chance --
why did they keep doing that?

Because at root, lawyers, in general, and hearing chairmen,
in particular, realize the inherent unfairness of telling some little

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1 old lady from Iowa that she's got to figure out why it is that the pump
2 doesn't work, and she tries to do it the first time and she doesn't
3 quite get it right, and his technical guy says, you know, there may be
4 an issue here, so he says, well, I'm going to give you another chance
5 and I'm going to give you another chance. You give the little old lady
6 the resources to hire herself a pump expert and then you don't have to
7 give her more than one bite at the apple; by God, she gets it in.

8 So, you can be very tough on equally funded people, but it's
9 very, very hard to be tough on them when they don't have the resources
10 to do what you're wanting them to do.

11 Now, you can run them over. You can steamroll them. You
12 can just push them aside and go ahead and do your thing, and then,
13 whatever the consequences of that are, they are.

14 I think, from the perspective of the utility and the
15 Commission what happens is that you end up with less safe facilities
16 getting licensed, and from the perspective of the society, you end up
17 with the possibility of a lot of disruptive activity, but that's a
18 possibility.

19 But if the real plan -- if that statement that was back up
20 there is something that we all believe in, I want you to understand
21 where intervenors come from when they take longer to do something.

22 They come from that because they don't have the ability to
23 do it in less time, and if they have the ability to do it in less time,
24 as much as some may squeal about it, they can then be expected to act on
25 the basis of the same kind of time schedules that everybody else can
meet.

Now, lastly, this issue about the applicants not getting
their act together, or the staff, and then getting another chance and
another chance -- someone told me this once, and now the General
Counsel's office people can correct me if I'm wrong.

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1 I believe that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission does not
2 have the authority to deny licenses.

3 It only has the authority to say, on the basis of the
4 available record, the license will not be approved, that no utility can
5 ever be told no and never come back again, the way an intervenor can be
6 told no and never come back again, and that that is one reason why
7 there's never a resolution of the case where the utility has just -- or
8 the staff, whoever, has just failed and it's over, it's ended, and I
9 don't know whether that's built into the statute or practice or whether
10 I'm just wrong about that, but I do know that that's one reason why, in
11 these hearings, when the intervenor finds a flaw, we don't go to a
12 verdict, we go to a delay which then allows the other side to try to fix
13 the flaw, and then we come back and do it again, and that may be delay.

14 I don't think it's our fault. I don't know whether it's
15 built into the system or not, but I certainly have seen it happen in the
16 licensing hearing process.

17 The last thing I want to say is -- because I know you want
18 to talk about this generic question, and somebody raised, you know, what
19 are these generic issues.

20 GESMO -- just about the time we thought we had the mixed
21 oxide fuel thing locked. The Commission took out of GESMO the only
22 issue that anybody cared about, proliferation.

23 Nuclear waste disposal -- we had the construction permit for
24 Seabrook stopped over the failure to consider the nuclear waste issue in
25 the NEPA process. The Commission took it away from us and said no, no,
we're going to do it generically.

The history of this agency is, whenever the intervenor gets
you guys really good, you change the rules on us.

So, should you have the right to make generic rules? Of
course you should. Is that a sensible, fair thing to do? Yes, it is.

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1 But it's been done in a way that has made us very skiddish and very
2 nervous, and so, we feel like we're always getting screwed. It's the
3 ultimate Catch-22.

4 GRAY: Okay. So, it's a concern about last-minute rules
5 when you've got an issue that the Commission then says no, take that
6 away.

7 ROISMAN: They didn't mention re-racking. They did it on
8 re-racking, too.

9 CURRAN: License renewal.

10 RICCIO: License renewal. There's more to it, though, too.
11 I just want to get this out, because I may not be here tomorrow. I
12 haven't decided yet.

13 The problem is that you're genericizing things that people
14 don't even know are going to be -- you know, affect their interests at
15 all.

16 Site-banking, for instance, you know, under the new one-step
17 process -- how does someone know that they're going to build a reactor
18 there 30 years ahead of time or 20 years ahead of time, I think is the
19 date. How do people who don't even know their license is going to be
20 renewed yet address the generic environmental impact statement on
21 relicensing?

22 I don't even know the 22 reactors you guys are talking
23 about. How does someone in the general public have an opportunity to
24 comment on a generic rule-making that may affect their interest when the
25 industry hasn't even decided whether they're going to renew yet?

It's basic fairness questions.

26 CAMERON: We'll be back tomorrow for further discussion of
27 this to see if we can at least suggest some legitimate constraints on
28 the use of generic methods to take issues off the table but also for
29 other reasons.

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1 Tony's second point about some of the problems -- I put
2 dysfunctionalities up there -- that result -- Diane and Susan both
3 mentioned the fact that, if there were better alternatives available,
4 then some of these things might not happen, and I think we need to
5 explore that tomorrow.

6 What I'll do is I'll type up these problems that we have
7 talked about today for a hand-out tomorrow so that we can proceed to
8 discuss them, to see what the extent of the problem is and a potential
9 solution.

10 We've heard a lot of suggestions about solutions, so we've
11 covered a wide range of issues today.

12 ROISMAN: Would you also type up the sort of -- at least the
13 tentative draft rewrite of Ellen's proposals just in one place so people
14 can look at it again and see do they agree with that or not?

15 CAMERON: I'll type up something that is -- I'll put all of
16 that in for tomorrow, and I think if we can -- I think we had a
17 necessary discussion about a lot of issues today, and maybe tomorrow we
18 can put a finer point on some of these things and be more specific.

19 Jay and Larry, final comments, and just let me go to the
20 audience to see if there's anything out there, since we're about ready
21 to adjourn.

22 Jay?

23 SILBERG: In responding to a couple of things that Tony
24 said, are there solutions that don't involve the Commission. Yeah.
25 Whenever we can, we use them.

 In DFS, the local landowners came in armed for bear, lots of
resources, but they were willing to sit down and tell us what their
problems were, and we settled with them. They dropped out of the
hearing. They're now in support of the project.

 We tried to do the same thing with Diane's client. They

1 don't want to talk to us.

2 When you have a party that says over my dead body, terms and
3 conditions, none, you know, you can't have a solution that's outside the
4 scope of the Commission.

5 ROISMAN: I'm talking about procedural solutions.

6 SILBERG: We'd be happy to talk about procedural solutions
7 or substantive solutions.

8 BOLLWERK: I always encourage the parties to settle.

9 [Laughter.]

10 SILBERG: When you have parties for whom it becomes a
11 religious issue, as opposed to a substantive issue, if you will, there
12 doesn't seem to be any common ground.

13 I would love for there to be common ground. I would love
14 for there to be a procedural out, another route. We've been able to
15 accomplish that in a number of cases, but it's just not always the case.

16 CURRAN: It doesn't have to be a religious issue for someone
17 to feel strongly about it.

18 ROISMAN: I always thought it was the utilities that had the
19 religious, that when God said let there be light, it was a utility
20 executive that flipped the switch.

21 CAMERON: All right, Jay. Anything else?

22 SILBERG: In terms of genericizing, I think that the more
23 generic resolutions to issues we have, the better off everyone is,
24 because yes, you don't know if you are going to have a plant in your
25 back yard, but everybody in the country knows that there's an issue
that's now on the table, and if they are interested in it, you know,
they ought to be able to participate, and yes, there may be some people
who will participate unnecessarily, but I don't think that's really been
the case. The folks who are going to be upset know who they are, and
they're going to be upset regardless.

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1 And in terms of the multiple bites at the apple, I think we
2 have to bear in mind that the purpose of the NRC is public health and
3 safety. It's not a game of seeing, you know, whose license we can grant
4 or deny, but it's having the public health and safety protected.

5 And to say that you can't -- if a problem comes up in a
6 staff review, that we can't amend the application and change the design
7 to cure a problem that the staff had pointed out or to do the same if
8 it's a problem that the intervenors have pointed out in a hearing, I
9 think, is warping the process and why the NRC is here.

10 The NRC is not here to give lawyers on both sides the
11 opportunity to expand their litigation skills. It's to protect the
12 safety of the public, and I think we need to bear that in mind. It's
13 not a game.

14 CAMERON: Okay.

15 Quick comment from Susan, last word to Larry.

16 We are going to discuss these issues again tomorrow,
17 hopefully with some results.

18 Susan?

19 HIATT: I guess I would touch on what Jay talked about,
20 finding common ground, and the reluctance of some people to do that.

21 I guess I'm reminded of an article that I saw with the title
22 of "Will He Talk and Other Thought Pollutants," and common ground is one
23 of those in there, and it was a place to meet after you alone have
24 handed over your sword, and I think there's a perception among some
25 people that that's what that involves, finding common ground, that
you've given up your sword, like what's in 10 CFR 2, and maybe that's
why they're reluctant to do that.

 CAMERON: All right.

 Larry.

 CHANDLER: Tony had suggested or at least asked whether

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1 there's any foundation to what he recalls having heard. I'm not aware
2 of any statutory requirement or regulatory provision that prevents the
3 Commission from denying a license.

4 In the material area, we have at least one pending denial
5 proceeding underway. In the reactor area, they're practical issues.
6 Where the staff identifies technical deficiencies, it certainly can deny
7 a license.

8 There have been a number of facilities at which -- let me
9 back up. There have been a number of applications for facilities, in
10 connection with which the staff questions have caused the applicant to
11 rethink the advisability of their proposal, and they have been
12 withdrawn.

13 ROISMAN: I think my point was can you tell them no and they
14 can't ever come back with it again, and the answer is I don't think you
15 can.

16 CHANDLER: You can deny the application. The initial
17 application itself has been denied. You wouldn't foreclose them,
18 obviously, from coming back. The APA doesn't contemplate that either,
19 as far as I can tell.

20 ROISMAN: Right. I didn't mention it to suggest that it
21 shouldn't be allowed, and I understood why it was. I mentioned it to
22 indicate where a lot of delay comes in the process is you go -- I mean
23 in Comanche Peak, we went to a certain point and the utility basically
24 said we're going to stand still for a while, and they stood still for a
25 while.

So, if you look at start date and end date in Comanche Peak,
you'd say, wow, that took a long time to license.

CHANDLER: And there are any number of cases like that, in
which utilities have sort of gone back for any number of reasons.
Comanche was one set of reasons; Diablo Canyon was another set of

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1 reasons.

2 RICCIO: Good reasons, too.

3 CHANDLER: They were good reasons. Absolutely, they were
4 good reasons, and the process -- even the hearing process, not only the
5 staff review, but the hearing process.

6 GRAY: George Edgar points out that the NRC can deny an
7 application with prejudice. The NRC could find, for example, that a
8 proposed site is no good. You can't amend the application to fix it. I
9 mean that can be done. I don't know that it has been done up to now
10 with regard to a nuclear power plant.

11 CAMERON: Larry, did you want to make one final comment?

12 CHANDLER: I would bring that to the attention of the Los
13 Angeles Water & Power people and ask them about Malibu.

14 CAMERON: I guess this is where I've got get into this, case
15 management.

16 CHANDLER: From an agency standpoint we, too, are as
17 interested as others in any settlement of a proceeding. Litigation is
18 not necessarily the answer to everything.

19 CAMERON: That's a great closing remark from the NRC.
20 Is there anybody out in the audience who's left standing?
21 Bob, state your name and affiliation for the transcript,
22 please.

23 TEMPLE: Bob Temple, a partner with Hopkins & Sutter.

24 A quick note possibly for your board is to add fast-track
25 procedures where appropriate, where risk-informed reviews suggest it's
appropriate.

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It's an answer to delay under certain circumstances where it
would be inappropriate to be holding up a particular activity because of
an intervention or a particular motion.

CAMERON: And when you say it would be inappropriate to be

1 holding it up, it would be inappropriate because of the types of things
2 that Tony Thompson was saying, low-risk, or inappropriate for some other
3 reason?

4 TEMPLE: Either low-risk or procedurally inappropriate.

5 CAMERON: Okay. We'll put that on the list, and I just
6 thank you all for staying with us today, and we'll see most of you back
7 tomorrow, and we'll have some materials for you tomorrow morning to make
8 the discussion a little bit easier, and we'll start at 8:30. Thank you.

9 [Whereupon, at 5:27 p.m., the meeting was recessed, to
10 reconvene at 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 27, 1999.]

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