

WELCOME

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The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) invites your comments on the proposed regulations for a proposed repository at Yucca Mountain.

AUG 12 1999
ADJUTANT GENERAL

1. What are your major concerns about the proposed criteria NRC is considering using to decide whether to license a repository at Yucca Mountain?

a. Mr. Bill Reamer
Division of Waste Management
U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20555

June 21, 1999

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE **PR 2,19,20 et al.**
(64FR8640)

b. Dear Mr. Reamer;

I am sending you the text of my speech which was too long to deliver at the meeting. I gave 2 copies to the Secretary of the meeting with the request to include it into the official record.

c. The speech is the contents of my large article which will be published very soon in a Polish weekly in Chicago (I am writing in Polish).

Very truly yours,
Andrew Poleski
Andrew Poleski

2. What issues would you like NRC to address regarding its licensing requirements for the Yucca Mountain project?

3. In your opinion, how can NRC better respond to your concerns?

4. Please make any comments about NRC's role that you think would be helpful.

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AUG 12 1999
Acknowledged by card

SECI-02

YUCCA MOUNTAIN SYNDROME

Speech given at meeting organized by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the day of June 16, 1999 at UNLV - on proposed regulations for the licensing of a possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

My name is Andrew Poleski, I am a professional writer living in the U.S.A. since 1977 as a political refugee from Poland. I have lived in Las Vegas with my son, a UNLV graduate, since 1986. In 1983 I published a scientific book entitled "Wing Hacks", subtitled "The secrets of using civilian commercial airplanes from communist countries to transport arms and saboteurs", which - together with the espionage work a few Polish pilots, civilian and military, was the biggest success of American military intelligence throughout the U.S.'s 70-year period fight against the Soviet Union.

Now, for a Polish publisher in Chicago, because I am writing in Polish, I am preparing a popular-science book entitled "Yucca Mountain Syndrome", in which the proposed Yucca Mountain repository, with all the problems related to this initiative - will show the general state of danger from the enormous accumulation of the globe's nuclear, radioactive materials and substances, for military and civil use. A short review of this book along with a contents in English - I will send to whom it may concern on written or fax demands.

Now to the point at hand: if we are discussing the "Yucca Mountain Project", we must look at it mainly from the viewpoint of safety or rather, danger. Those opposed to it have advanced different arguments, while logical, at the some time they're not; the goverment and builders of defense are frankly speaking, not skillful. The effect is such that public opinion in Nevada and the state's guests and tourists, are disorienteted and confused; right now about 75 percent of Nevada residents are opposed to the project. This is not good.

We have here three aspect of the problem: technical, scientific and psychological; these are my own classification.

First is the TECHNICAL ASPECT: is a associated to the construction of the storage site for the radioactive waste and radiation; as we know for the next 10 thousand years.

Second ASPECT, SCIENTIFIC is the well-known matter of water, earthquakes and in general seismic motions and a few other dangers,

termed as biological-environmental.

And the third ASPECT, PSYCHOLOGICAL; is regarding the tension experienced by people especially living in Nevada and Las Vegas, facing the danger of the repository and other events, such as nuclear war.

The first aspect. The technical side of the "Yucca Mountain Project", in my opinion, does not create any danger. American technologies are without question the most advanced in the world and the team of constructors, scientists, engineers, technicians, etc. guarantee that the site will be completely safe, after it's built and later, while it's being used. Americans have never had any problems or difficulties with nuclear devices and plants, other than the one accident at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, years ago. The suitable rules of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other federal and state institutions, are strict clear and precision and guarantee that the initiative will be one hundred percent safe. All people living in Las Vegas and Nevada for a few dozen years are living daily next to nuclear devices; we have here nuclear sites, Nellis Air Force Base which contains 1450 nuclear devices, etc., all very safe. This circumstance is also a serious argument that the "Yucca Mountain Project" will be safe in full. American technologies will also advance and get better, as time goes by.

The second aspect, scientific, is really the biggest controversy, in discussion and polemics. The most important opponent to the project is a former "Yucca Mountain Project" (DOE) employee, and geologist from my home country of Poland, Mr. Jerry Szymanski, a present employee of the State of Nevada General Attorney's Office. He believes that underground water can inundate the repository, and create a great catastrophe, especially because the water comes from underground, not from rain - as supporters of the project claim.

Jerry Szymanski is supported in this by several scientists from the U.S. and a few from other countries, mostly stronger-known Russian geologist, a member of the Russian Science Academy, Jurij Dublianskij. In January 1999 issue, of the magazine "Science in Siberia", an article written by the Russian journalist Irina Samahova, explained it all by its title: "The End of Nuclear Waste. Russian Scientist has Questioned the Most Important Project of the United States". In another scientific, geological Russian magazine, also from January of this year, a team of four Russian specialists under direction of Jurij Dublianskij, along with Jerry Szymanski - in larger articles talked in general about the

enormous danger posed by the "Yucca Mountain Project". The Russians, as analogical as in the former days of the Soviet Union, having their own serious problems with nuclear waste, without resolutions; here play a very smart game, and teach Americans how they should act. They warn the entire world of the possible catastrophe of Yucca Mountain can bring to our planet an enormous, incalculable calamity.

At this point for those not orientated I'll explain that leading the axis of the "water controversy" is the fact that American scientists, seventy members of the National Science Academy, said that water in Yucca Mountain came from rain, and isn't of any danger. Jerry Szymanski, and the Russians and a few others, claim that water is of a underground descent. Polemics has a place at different scientific conferences, at official meetings, various administrative-law acts and at last in the massmedia, American and worldwide. About Jerry Szymanski, and his "water theory" a large report was written in the New York Times (weekly magazine from November 18, 1990), and also a report in a very known in the Western Europe German weekly, "Der Spiegel" (December 1997). I read all materials in their original language; I knowing good Russian and German, so all have contain the same point: the "Yucca Mountain Project" is so dangerous, and even senseless, that it should be immediately stopped, right now! And the guilty should be punished! According to them, the Russian and German journalists know better as than the American scientists and engineers if "Yucca Mountain Project" is safe. According to me, a Polish writer and scientist - yes. It's safe, and it isn't a matter here if the water's from underground or from rain.

All this "water polemics" is strictly speaking - ridiculous. Why? Very simple: right now, A.D. 1999, and a "little" later, even to the year 12000 (our 2000 and 10.000 term for nuclear waste), won't be here, in the entire state of Nevada, any water, underground or rain exist. The geological and climate situation is very stable here, and will be so for a very long, long time. "Water polemics" is in this situation even harmful; it diverts from attention from another questions, for example from the danger of earthquakes or seismic motions. But so and so, evident and unquestionable is Jerry Szymanski's merit to pay attention to the problem through world public opinion and massmedia; this can be good for the entire matter.

Now for the third aspect, psychologically, most important for public opinion, especially people of Las Vegas and Nevada. I think that

these people, we, are not suitably informed. Fear, and dread based on the unprecedents in our human civilization and history undertaking - absolutely can't turn into a psychosis. We should also state that nuclear waste, dispensable today is dangerous - tomorrow, even after tens or hundreds of years - for America it could be a big and real treasure: if we'll find a method for a second use, as recycled paper, plastics and metal scrap. I know that working on this are a dozens of American scientists, among others a few physicists from UNLV. United States - as the unquestionable world leader in all technologies, can here help also other countries, for suitable fees, take their high-level radioactive waste for safe keeping. And later it can be transformed into real treasure, better than the federal gold reserves at Fort Knox. The world situation which will develop in the first 2-3 decades of the XXI century, will be ruled by nuclear power and hard currency; we must always remember this.

In conclusion, I am also sure, that in a very short time, a method of destroying nuclear waste will be developed, maybe even as soon as the year 2010. The world of microkosmos of materie will be deciphered soon, as the secrets of DNA, mainly through the help of super-computers which are American domain, that mind automatically the liquidation of any danger of all radioactive material and substances.

For the opponents of the "Yucca Mountain Project", after carefully examining their arguments - it is necessary to ask one question: If not here - then where? This question I posed to Jerry Szymanski, my good friend, a few times. And he answered "anywhere, but not at Yucca!". This answer I take of course as noncommittal, and even I joked that maybe it should be stored in Manhattan, or Washington, D.C.; this last place for sure would rejoice for all opponents of politics of federal government, especially presently. But jokes are jokes...

Talking very seriously: where, if not at Yucca Mountain, should America place high-level radioactive waste? Now 77 thousand tons, later much, much more! Where? And where must do the same other countries: Russia, China, Great Britain, Germany, France and several others? Any country, except the United States, are not ready for such an undertaking, areas of Siberia, Greenland, Antarctic, the Arctic, analogical as a big African desert Sahara - are useless here! So - only in the U.S.A.! The only country - I will underline once again - which has the good and suitable technologies. And if it's to be in the U.S. - than in Yucca

Mountain!

So, Yucca Mountain is not - according to opponents - the worst place for radioactive waste, but the best. An additional argument "for" is because of the usually military safety of the site, guaranteed by the best air force in the world. We must also remember the economic aspect of the project for the state: a big tax income, large number of employees, etc. Even the opponents have here some financial profit.

Finally, I'll leave you with three practical ideas:

1. Maybe it would be good to organize at UNLV a suitable institute to manage all "Yucca Mountain Project" problems plus service for other countries.
2. UNLV could create a model "Yucca Mountain Project"; visual cognition should bring better understanding. Understanding lessens fear.
3. A bulletin could also be published, eventually as a quarterly or as an insert to local papers, about not only the "Yucca Mountain Project", but also worldwide nuclear problems, which will be every year greater and greater.

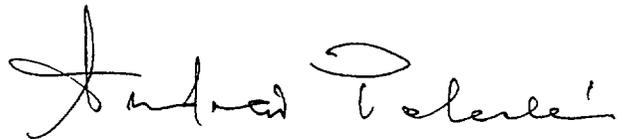
The text of this speech, in manuscript, I will give to the chairman of the meeting. Thank you very much.

Andrew Poleski

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Translated

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