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# OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Agency: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Title: Incident Investigation Team

Docket No. Interview of: MICHAEL CHRIST

LOCATION: Carnegie, Pennsylvania

DATE: MONDAY, December 7, 1992

PAGES: 1 - 22

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

[10:30 a.m.]

1  
2  
3 MS. JONES: My name is Cynthia Jones. I am a  
4 Section Leader in the Operations Branch in the Division of  
5 Industrial Medical Nuclear Safety in our headquarters office  
6 located in Rockville, Maryland.

7 We are here at the BFI site in Carnegie,  
8 Pennsylvania.

9 What I would like you to do is state your name,  
10 full name, spell your last name, and then give us the title  
11 that you have at this facility?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: Michael Christ, Medical  
13 Supervisor. The last name is C-h-r-i-s-t.

14 MR. LLOYD: I am also here this morning, Ron Lloyd  
15 from the NRC.

16 MS. JONES: What we are here for, the purpose of  
17 this investigation team is to establish what happened on the  
18 said incident earlier to identify any probable causes, and  
19 to provide any appropriate feedback to the industry  
20 regarding any lessons that we learned from the incident.

21 For your information, Mike, the Incident  
22 Investigation Team, or IIT, as we have referred to, is one  
23 of the highest levels of investigation team that the  
24 Commission authorizes.

25 As I mentioned before, there is a team that is in

1 Indiana, Pennsylvania. We are here in Carnegie to fit the  
2 missing pieces together as the shipment was transferred by  
3 BFI.

4 One of the reasons that we conduct these  
5 interviews and have it recorded is to be able to aid the  
6 team in developing a factual record, and using this as a  
7 convenience, really, to minimize any note taking we might  
8 have to take during an interview.

9 Transcripts will be made available for review, and  
10 what I am handing you now is Exhibit 3.1, and that explains  
11 that you will have an opportunity to make an corrections  
12 where you feel that something was transcribed incorrectly,  
13 or if you need to make clarifications to statements which  
14 were said but not meant. Corrections and clarifications  
15 will be included as part of the transcript.

16 What we will have to do with this transcript is,  
17 it will be available, but it will be available in Indiana.  
18 Those will be available approximately 24 hours after this  
19 interview is conducted.

20 What we would like you to do is to tell us what  
21 happened on the incident in your own way. If you need to  
22 refer to any shipping sheets, you can go ahead and do that,  
23 but just explain to us in your own way what the sequence of  
24 events were as they happened at the site?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: As we found out?

1 MS. JONES: Right.

2 THE INTERVIEWEE: We weren't notified of the  
3 incident until Friday. What was the date on Friday?

4 MS. JONES: Last Friday?

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: The 27th.

6 MS. JONES: The 27th.

7 THE INTERVIEWEE: At that time, that is when we  
8 dispatched [REDACTED] to Warren to pick up the truck  
9 that some type of hot shipment on it. At that time, he  
10 brought it back to our facility here, and it was in the yard  
11 over Thanksgiving.

12 Then, on --

13 MS. JONES: If I could just stop you for one  
14 moment.

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: I am sorry.

16 MS. JONES: If you can back up for one minute and  
17 explain what your duties are here, and what responsibilities  
18 you have at BFI?

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: My responsibilities here at BFI  
20 is, I handle all complete operations of anything that would  
21 take place in regards to our Medical Waste Division.

22 MS. JONES: Who was the driver, and what do the  
23 pick-ups normally do on the date that it was picked up at  
24 the nursing home?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: You received the paperwork on

1 that.

2 MS. JONES: Let me hand that to you now.

3 THE INTERVIEWEE: When he arrives at a stop, the  
4 first thing he does is, he marks down his arrival time,  
5 mile that he has gone from stop to stop, the boxes that he  
6 would have picked up at this location, the departing time,  
7 the actual load time that he was at that location, and this  
8 is all recorded on what we call his ride sheet when he picks  
9 up the waste at any given stop.

10 MS. JONES: And who was the driver of the vehicle?

11 THE INTERVIEWEE: This was [REDACTED] and his pick-  
12 up was 11/25/92.

13 MS. JONES: Does it say how many boxes were picked  
14 up?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it does.

16 MS. JONES: And how many was it?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: Three boxes.

18 MS. JONES: Three boxes?

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: Correct.

20 MS. JONES: Do you know what size boxes they were?

21 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, these were three large  
22 boxes. The dimensions were 21-21-by-31.

23 MS. JONES: So when he picked up the shipment from  
24 the Scenery Hill Nursing Home, then what happened?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: Well, he completed his route for

1 that day, and upon returning to our district here, he  
2 unloaded these boxes at the Trailer 808.

3 MS. JONES: And how long did that take?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: From his unload time, one hour  
5 from the time he started to finish his unloading.

6 MS. JONES: Did anyone help him unload?

7 THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

8 MS. JONES: Could anyone have helped him unload?

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Anyone could have helped  
10 him unload.

11 MS. JONES: But is that normal practice?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: They usually do it themselves.

13 MS. JONES: So, in general, what type of work is  
14 done at this facility?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: In regards to medical waste,  
16 nothing other than just transferring it from a straight  
17 truck on to a trailer truck. That is it.

18 MS. JONES: And that is a semi-trailer truck?

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, 48-foot trailer.

20 MS. JONES: So once it got transferred, that was  
21 about what time?

22 THE INTERVIEWEE: Well, it was picked-up on  
23 Wednesday, with Thanksgiving being Thursday, Thursday  
24 evening, the approximate time I do not know. Jim Goodwell,  
25 anywhere from one to five a.m. Friday morning took this load

1 up to Warren, Ohio.

2 MS. JONES: And it would have been between those  
3 times?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: Correct.

5 MS. JONES: Is it possible for us to get the exact  
6 time that he picked it up?

7 THE INTERVIEWEE: Warren would have that for you.

8 MS. JONES: Warren has that, okay.

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: With the time that it arrived.

10 MS. JONES: Do you know what time it left here,  
11 though?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: From the time Warren says it  
13 came up there, you can put an hour-and-a-half to two hours  
14 subtracted to get the time.

15 MS. JONES: My question gets down to, we have  
16 understood from Warren, Ohio, that it arrived there at 10:00  
17 a.m.

18 THE INTERVIEWEE: Okay.

19 MS. JONES: So if I back-up --

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: It probably would have been  
21 roughly 8:00 a.m.

22 MS. JONES: So I am trying to find when he left  
23 this facility with the truck. Is there a log-in sheet at  
24 all that you would have?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: I can find that for you, yes.



1 MS. JONES: We will probably ask you for that  
2 information.

3 Do you happen to know what route the driver took  
4 when he left here?

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: The exact route? No. You would  
6 have to talk with Jim Goodwell.

7 MS. JONES: And you said he'll be here later on  
8 today?

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: Hopefully.

10 MS. JONES: Okay. How did you find out that the  
11 truck was determined to have radioactive material?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: We were notified by Warren  
13 roughly -- I'm just guessing -- 10:00, 11:00.

14 MS. JONES: And do you remember who called you?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: They called [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 MS. JONES: [REDACTED] works here?

18 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, and at that time we  
19 dispatched [REDACTED] up to Warren to bring this trailer  
20 back.

21 MS. JONES: Is that a normal practice, to have a  
22 truck driver go back when you get a shipment that needs to  
23 come back here?

24 THE INTERVIEWEE: First time this, an incident  
25 like this has ever happened.

1 MS. JONES: Do you know anything about the Warren  
2 facility and where it would have been parked or any  
3 information that your driver gave you --

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: No, I don't.

5 MS. JONES: -- on where they normally put these  
6 trucks when they go to Warren?

7 THE INTERVIEWEE: Well, they usually go on into  
8 the yard.

9 MS. JONES: Into the yard?

10 THE INTERVIEWEE: Right.

11 MS. JONES: Okay, and what would happen then?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: It would just be in -- in my  
13 opinion it's just waiting to be next-in-line to be unloaded.

14 MS. JONES: And Warren does that?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: Correct.

16 MS. JONES: Okay. Then once you got the call  
17 here, then what happened? You sent the truck driver out you  
18 just mentioned and then what happened?

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: [REDACTED] went up to bring  
20 the trailer back, okay, and here got back here, I do not  
21 know what time, Friday afternoon.

22 That trailer sat in our yard until Monday morning.

23 MS. JONES: Did [REDACTED] know that it had  
24 radioactive material in it?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: Well, we didn't know exactly

1       what was in the trailer but, yes, we knew there was  
2       something wrong with the load.

3               MS. JONES: Did Warren tell you that it was  
4       radioactive or that you just needed to come and pick it up?

5               THE INTERVIEWEE: They told us it was some type of  
6       active material that the alarms went off.

7               MS. JONES: Approximately how many people work at  
8       the facility here in Carnegie?

9               THE INTERVIEWEE: Including drivers? I'm just  
10      guessing -- 70, 80. I have no idea.

11              MS. JONES: Is it possible to get a list of people  
12      or number of people exactly that are employed here?

13              THE INTERVIEWEE: Denise can get that for you.

14              MS. JONES: Okay. I'll ask you for that.

15              So now it's a Monday, November 30th and the  
16      trailer has sat here over the weekend. Approximately how  
17      many people are here during the weekend?

18              THE INTERVIEWEE: Minimum amount of people were  
19      here on the weekend. We don't have -- we have scheduled  
20      maybe 10, 15 drivers that would be working on a Saturday.

21              MS. JONES: And on Sunday would anyone be working?

22              THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

23              MS. JONES: Okay.

24              THE REPORTER: I'm sorry, what did you say?

25              THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

1 MS. JONES: So do you remember what time you would  
2 have started?

3 THE INTERVIEWEE: Denise, what time did we start  
4 on that trailer?

5 MS. CLAYTOR: It was like five or ten after 1:00.

6 THE INTERVIEWEE: It was in the afternoon.

7 MS. JONES: Five or ten after 1:00, okay, and then  
8 what happened? We will be interviewing Denise later too, so  
9 we're trying to get --

10 THE INTERVIEWEE: Oh, yes? I'm "1," huh?

11 MS. JONES: Yes. As best as you can remember?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: We backed the straight truck up  
13 to the trailer and we unloaded approximately 20, 30 boxes  
14 into the straight truck. We pulled the straight truck away  
15 from the trailer and at that time we started testing each  
16 individual box to find out which boxes were actually hot.

17 MS. JONES: How did you test it?

18 THE INTERVIEWEE: With our geiger counter.

19 MS. JONES: And who was with you?

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: Safety Jim and Denise.

21 MS. JONES: Okay. Let the record show that was  
22 Jim Gajewski and Denise --

23 THE INTERVIEWEE: Claytor.

24 MS. JONES: Claytor. Who had the survey  
25 instrument?

1 THE INTERVIEWEE: Jim Gajewski, most of the time.

2 MS. JONES: Okay, okay, and after you pulled the  
3 truck, the straight truck around, then what happened?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: We started just testing each box  
5 individually until we finally isolated the one particular  
6 hot box.

7 MS. JONES: Were you holding the boxes or near the  
8 boxes?

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I actually unloaded the  
10 box off the trailer. I actually took the box off the  
11 straight truck and put it on the ground and Jim and I both  
12 would have been moving this box Point A to Point B doing the  
13 testing.

14 MS. JONES: Was it very heavy?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: I don't know the exact weight of  
16 the box but I am just guessing 20-30 pounds.

17 MS. JONES: Could we get that off the record?

18 THE INTERVIEWEE: It's on there.

19 MS. JONES: Okay.

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: The weight is on there.

21 MR. LLOYD: From the time that you started, which  
22 was some time after one o'clock --

23 THE INTERVIEWEE: Correct.

24 MR. LLOYD: -- to the time you discovered the box  
25 that was actually the contaminated box, about how long was

1 that?

2 THE INTERVIEWEE: We were there working on it  
3 approximately the whole time, anywhere from an hour to an  
4 hour and a half, in that area.

5 MR. LLOYD: Okay.

6 MS. JONES: Do you know what the meter reading was  
7 when you had the meter?

8 THE INTERVIEWEE: I do not know.

9 MS. JONES: Okay.

10 THE INTERVIEWEE: Jim has that information.

11 MS. JONES: We can ask Jim that. Are you aware of  
12 what a meter is used for?

13 THE INTERVIEWEE: Correct, yes.

14 MS. JONES: And what is that?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: To check the radioactive  
16 material.

17 MS. JONES: Okay. So once you isolated the box,  
18 then what happened? You took it --

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: We took the box, we actually  
20 left the rest of the boxes in the straight truck and the  
21 last box I put on was the hot box, okay, on the back of this  
22 straight truck, okay? I took the keys from this truck  
23 because I didn't want anyone to actually take this load  
24 anywhere the following morning, okay, and that's all I did.

25 Then later on in the day I was gone. That's when

1 Denise -- excuse me -- that's when Denise and Jim took this  
2 box off this trailer and put it in that isolated container,  
3 okay?

4 MS. JONES: Okay. Did you open the box at all?

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, we did. The three of us  
6 opened the box and actually went through the bags, medical  
7 waste bags that were contained inside this box.

8 MS. JONES: Why did you do that?

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: Looking for whatever radioactive  
10 material was in here.

11 MS. JONES: If you would have found that  
12 radioactive material, what would you have done?

13 THE INTERVIEWEE: We probably just would have  
14 isolated the load.

15 MS. JONES: Were you able to find any names or  
16 patients' names or --

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: Not in this box, no. That was  
18 the problem why we couldn't isolate who the actual shipper  
19 was for this material and the following morning, Tuesday  
20 morning, is -- there was identification on that box. I know  
21 there was three boxes from this particular shipper but I  
22 didn't know who the shipper was.

23 I got the other two boxes and I started to go  
24 through those boxes and that's when I found out there was a  
25 few names and a signature of this individual who signed the

1 top of the box.

2 MS. JONES: Do you remember who that was?

3 THE INTERVIEWEE: No, I don't.

4 MS. JONES: Okay, that's fine.

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: Okay. His initials were on the  
6 box and I called this location, Scenery Hill, and I asked  
7 them if they had a patient whose prescription I found in  
8 this other box which through elimination determined that was  
9 the location of this patient where this box came from.

10 MS. JONES: Do you remember who you talked to at  
11 Scenery Hill?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

13 MR. LLOYD: Do you remember the time that you made  
14 that phone call?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: It was roughly about 8:30 in the  
16 morning.

17 MS. JONES: In the morning?

18 THE INTERVIEWEE: Monday morning.

19 MR. LLOYD: Monday morning?

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: Tuesday morning, I am sorry.  
21 Tuesday morning.

22 MS. JONES: If we could go back a second to when  
23 you had the box off the truck, was there any one of you that  
24 was closest to the box during the whole time?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: All three of us were basically



1 in this box.

2 MS. JONES: And by "in this box" how close is  
3 that?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: We are on top of the box, and  
5 then I entered the box.

6 MS. JONES: Was your body how close away from the  
7 outside of the box, right next to it?

8 THE INTERVIEWEE: Right against the box.

9 MS. JONES: Do you remember how long from the time  
10 you found the box and took it off the truck, started going  
11 through it, how long it took you until you decided you  
12 couldn't get any information from the inside on a name?

13 THE INTERVIEWEE: I am guessing, in that  
14 particular box, five-ten minutes.

15 MS. JONES: So after you couldn't find anything,  
16 what did you do with the box?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: That is when we isolated it,  
18 taped it back up, and put it on the back of the straight  
19 truck.

20 MS. JONES: So once you called the nursing home,  
21 what happened after that?

22 THE INTERVIEWEE: Once I found out this individual  
23 patient was located at this location, which told us that  
24 this box came from Scenery Hill, I left a message. The  
25 gentleman who signed the treatment shipping papers wasn't

1 there that day. I instructed them that we have isolated  
2 that we have some radioactive material that we picked up  
3 from their location, and they would be calling me back.

4 MS. JONES: Did they call you back?

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: Probably within the hour they  
6 called back.

7 MS. JONES: Scenery Hill did?

8 THE INTERVIEWEE: I don't know if it was Scenery  
9 Hill or Indiana Cancer Center. I don't know who it was.

10 MS. JONES: Do you remember who called back, and  
11 who they talked with here?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: No, I don't. That information I  
13 did have and I gave to one of your people.

14 MS. JONES: Which reminds me, you talked with  
15 someone from our Region I Office. Do you remember who that  
16 was?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: Out of the Philadelphia Office?

18 MS. JONES: Right.

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: Out of Philadelphia, I have all  
20 that stuff written down.

21 MS. JONES: If you have a note of that?

22 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I gave it to [Phil Wills,  
23 he has that.

24 MS. JONES: We will get that.

25 So what happened after that then, you got a call

1 from someone, and you will find out if it was from the  
2 nursing home or the Cancer Treatment Center, and then what  
3 happened?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: Denise pretty much handled it in  
5 regards to who called back and isolating the actual box away  
6 from everything, and as far as who was going to come to pick  
7 it up. I really don't know.

8 MS. JONES: You weren't outside with Denise?

9 THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

10 MS. JONES: Were you here on the day that it was  
11 picked up?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: Not at that time of the day, no.  
13 I was gone.

14 MS. JONES: And when did you find out that it had  
15 been taken off your facility, taken away from your facility?

16 THE INTERVIEWEE: I actually knew it was picked up  
17 Wednesday morning when I came in. They had picked it up the  
18 previous afternoon.

19 MS. JONES: Has BFI in Warren, Ohio, called you  
20 and asked if this has been resolved?

21 THE INTERVIEWEE: They probably have. They didn't  
22 contact me, though, no.

23 MS. JONES: If they would contact someone here,  
24 who would that be?

25 THE INTERVIEWEE: Probably [REDACTED] or Denise.

1 MS. JONES: We can ask them.

2 Can you think of anything else, Ron?

3 MR. LLOYD: Have you had any subsequent phone  
4 calls from Warren on the outcome of this?

5 THE INTERVIEWEE: Not from Warren.

6 MR. LLOYD: From the nursing home?

7 THE INTERVIEWEE: Nothing from the nursing home,  
8 no.

9 MR. LLOYD: How about any news media?

10 THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

11 MS. JONES: Can you tell me if any of your  
12 drivers, either the straight truck drivers or semi drivers  
13 have a GM or radiation detection instrument available to  
14 them?

15 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes, they all have them.

16 MS. JONES: They all have it?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: Right.

18 MS. JONES: Are they given instructions on how to  
19 use these instruments?

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

21 MS. JONES: Is there a procedure that is  
22 documented at BFI that tells them how to use an instrument?

23 THE INTERVIEWEE: Is it documented, Jim?

24 Jim would probably have that.

25 MS. JONES: So we will ask Jim for a copy of that

1 procedure.

2 And what are your drivers supposed to do with the  
3 survey instrument?

4 THE INTERVIEWEE: Check for radiation materials in  
5 the trucks.

6 MS. JONES: And when would they do that, when they  
7 just get in the truck?

8 THE INTERVIEWEE: At each location.

9 MS. JONES: Do you know if this driver checked at  
10 this location?

11 THE INTERVIEWEE: He has been on vacation, and he  
12 just came back today, I do not know.

13 MS. JONES: Do you know, I know we have asked you  
14 this before, if there are any dates either here or at the --  
15 first of all, here at this facility, if you have ever had  
16 radioactive material that has been found here?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: Not that I am aware of, no.

18 MS. JONES: And you have been at this facility how  
19 long?

20 THE INTERVIEWEE: Fourteen months.

21 MS. JONES: Do you know if there is a possibility  
22 that Warren has received radioactive material?

23 THE INTERVIEWEE: I do not know. You would have  
24 to check with Warren.

25 MS. JONES: And do you know if there is a

1 procedure at this facility, if you find radioactive material  
2 what you should do?

3 THE INTERVIEWEE: If it is in writing, I do not  
4 know.

5 MS. JONES: Would Jim know?

6 THE INTERVIEWEE: I don't know.

7 MS. JONES: We can ask Jim. We will ask Jim.

8 As far as the response of the nursing home and the  
9 clinic, are you satisfied with that response?

10 THE INTERVIEWEE: In regards to what?

11 MS. JONES: Picking up the source?

12 THE INTERVIEWEE: I would think so, yes.

13 MS. JONES: I think that is all I have.

14 Ron, do you have anything?

15 MR. LLOYD: Have you notified the employees here  
16 that there was a source that came through on these dates?

17 THE INTERVIEWEE: All the employees?

18 MR. LLOYD: Right.

19 THE INTERVIEWEE: No, not that I am aware of.

20 MS. JONES: That reminds me of another question.  
21 When it was left here over Thanksgiving, actually over the  
22 weekend, was there any instructions given to personnel that  
23 there was a radioactive package that was --

24 THE INTERVIEWEE: Not that I am aware of, no.

25 MR. LLOYD: Can we break for a minute?

1 MS. JONES: Yes, let's break for a minute.

2 [Brief recess.]

3 MS. JONES: Let's go back on the record.

4 Do you have any questions for us regarding this  
5 incident, or anything you would like the NRC to do?

6 THE INTERVIEWEE: No, I don't.

7 MS. JONES: Or anyone else to talk with?

8 THE INTERVIEWEE: No.

9 MS. JONES: Okay, this is the close of the  
10 interview. Thank you very much.

11 [Whereupon, at 10:53 a.m., the interview was  
12 concluded.]

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceedings  
before the United States Nuclear Regulatory  
Commission

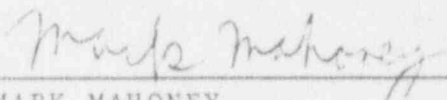
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NAME OF PROCEEDINGS: Interview of: MICHAEL CHRIST

DOCKET NUMBER:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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