

**Statement to the Transportation and Storage Subcommittee of the
Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future**

**Lewis G. Curtis, Major General (retired) USAF, member Maine Yankee
Community Advisory Panel on Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage and Removal**

**The Chewonki Foundation, Wiscasset, ME
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Chairman Meserve, distinguished Commissioners, my name is Lewis G. Curtis. I am a retired Major General who served 34 years on active duty as a logistics officer specializing in aircraft maintenance and nuclear munitions in the United States Air Force. I have been a member of the Maine Yankee Community Advisory Panel for the past 13 years. I was also the deputy director of Emergency Management for Boothbay Harbor for 17 years, and provided the structure for the Emergency Response Plans for three towns and the county after Maine Yankee ceased operations. Boothbay Harbor is just a few miles from here and was within Maine Yankee's emergency planning zoned during plant operations.

I join Maine Yankee CAP Chair Marge Kilkelly and Connecticut Yankee Community Advisory Board Chair Hugh Curley in welcoming you to Wiscasset to learn first hand about the Maine Yankee Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation and to hear our thoughts on the storage and transportation of this material. As Chair Kilkelly indicated in her testimony, the CAP has provided a regular opportunity for input of public concerns regarding Maine Yankee issues, and the panel added immeasurably to a smooth

decommissioning and the transfer of spent nuclear fuel from pool storage to the dry cask system we have in place today.

In my last four assignments on active duty, the management, control and modification of Air Force nuclear weapons was one of my responsibilities. In that capacity nuclear storage sites came under my purview, and I can attest to the fact that the level of security at our ISFSI with its reliance on local, county, and state first responders should there be any inadvertent or deliberate attempts at intrusion rivals that of the Air Force. However, this reliance on external law enforcement places an added burden on these resources. Centralized storage of spent nuclear fuel from decommissioned reactor sites with independent security and a cohesive workforce would be more efficient.

Regarding the transportation of the spent nuclear fuel canisters, I am most concerned about deteriorating infrastructure and the need to strengthen the shipment tracking system. With the closing of numerous military installations resulting from the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission otherwise known by its acronym BRACC, fewer rail and road movements of nuclear materials are taking place and those that do take place are from fewer geographical locations. Our rail and road arteries will need to be refurbished, including the local area. Also, there is in existence a movement monitoring system known as Bird Dog that needs to be revitalized to track the movement of spent nuclear fuel shipments. At one time Bird Dog was present in every state but is no longer due to reductions in defense installations.

At the June 25, 2009 CAP meeting here at Chewonki Chair Kilkelly proposed two actions for the CAP to consider:

1.) Invite the Administration's proposed Blue Ribbon Commission to hold a meeting at Chewonki to include a tour of the Maine Yankee ISFSI. The CAP agreed this would be a great way to educate the Commission about the special circumstances of single-unit shut down reactor sites and to make the case for removing fuel from these sites on a priority basis. Again, we appreciate that you accepted our invitation.

2.) Send a letter to the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Transportation and the Northeast congressional delegation, urging that funding for spent nuclear fuel transportation planning and infrastructure be included in the FY 2010 budget.

The CAP agreed that a letter in specific support of transportation funding was needed because people change, transportation systems change, and continuity in planning is critical. It was noted that the CAP is the closest thing to a public voice on the spent fuel issue.

However, it became clear after the June 25 CAP meeting that the FY 2010 budget process was too far along to influence so the focus became the FY 2011 budget. In the end the CAP did not send the letter because it was clear the Administration was intent on eliminating funding for the Yucca Mountain program including transportation planning. Transportation planning is critical to successfully closing the back end of the fuel cycle

and the CAP respectfully asks you to make this a priority in your report to the Administration.

It will do little good to move forward with centralized interim storage, for example, if the DOE has not developed a transport cask for the spent nuclear fuel, and the necessary studies and infrastructure upgrades have not been completed.

Centralized storage of spent fuel from decommissioned sites in the long run will be less costly and more efficient than the present 9 sites around the country. It will enhance security and also reduce the overall number of sites storing spent nuclear fuel and make those sites available for other purposes to benefit the communities and regions where they are now located. But to be successful we must begin now to plan for the transportation of this material.

Thank you and I'll be glad to answer any questions you may have.

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