

WELCOMING REMARKS AND CHARGE TO THE BOARD

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Hanford Advisory Board
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Assistant Secretary Tom Grumbly...Mary Riveland...Gerald Emison...
members of and alternates to the Hanford Advisory Board...distinguished
guests...ladies and gentlemen:

I'm very pleased to welcome you here this morning. Convening the Hanford
Advisory Board as my new and informal "Board of Directors" is an occasion to
which I've looked forward with both enthusiasm and confidence.

I use the term "Board of Directors" advisedly. But it's an appropriate
term because I need and expect high-quality advice from you on the major
policy and strategic decisions I face.

My enthusiasm stems from knowledge that we all share -- knowledge that
the advent of citizen advisory boards at Department of Energy sites is the
hallmark of a remarkable evolution.

It's evolution marked by sustained and sophisticated public interest in
the way the Department of Energy conducts its affairs. Today, citizens and
organizations with legitimate stakes in Hanford cleanup insist on
opportunities to influence our decisions with their informed advice.

That's as it should be.

It's evolution marked by a new Energy Secretary's candor and sensitivity
for meaningful public involvement -- and her refreshing view that a
centralized, overlord bureaucracy is not an acceptable way of doing the
nation's energy business.

In Hazel O'Leary's curriculum, participatory democracy is not an
elective course. It's required.

And that too is as it should be.

At the recent Hanford Summit, none of us mistook Mrs. O'Leary's meaning
when she said:

My expectation is that the Board will prepare a budget and a work plan for the balance of Fiscal 1994. The Board will have independent authority to spend its money as it sees fit -- with but one exception: the Board may not hire its own permanent technical staff. To do so would result in costly duplications of effort.

DOE simply cannot justify that. However, the Board is free to use its discretionary funds to bring in independent technical experts on ad hoc bases.

On staffing: I have committed Energy Department and contractor staff to support the Board's work -- and those costs will not be borne by the Board's budget. These are skilled professionals, experienced in working with you and with other similarly-charged advisory boards.

You have my word that my Acting Deputy Manager, Jack Keating or I will be present when the Board conveys its policy advice to DOE-RL. You have my assurance of your access to the Department's and our contractors' technical experts who will be here to interact with you during your deliberations.

Jon Yerxa is my point man for the Hanford Advisory Board -- and your point of contact to reach me.

DOE is committed to seeking your advice. We may not always be able to implement it. But, when we cannot, we will report back to you -- in writing -- the reasons why. And, we will try to help you modify your recommendation toward action that you can support and that we can implement.

Finally, DOE cannot and will not control this Board. You are independent of DOE and its Hanford regulators. That is the only arrangement the people of this region will find credible.

DOE will not presume what you need to know or when you need to know it. We will not limit the scope of your work.

I also have some expectations of you.

One: The Board is not going to be a handy, one-stop shop that simply punches DOE's public involvement tickets. I've made it clear to DOE and contractor managers that the Board will augment, not replace other reliable and effective public involvement programs in place now or planned for the future. There are interests not represented on this Board. We are obligated to solicit their views as well.

Two: From my point of view, creation of this Board has a simple driver: I need your advice. I need you to understand our mission and goals and how we propose to achieve them -- and the limits on our resources. I need your thoughtful judgments about major decisions we must make, and how we should go about making them.

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Tomorrow and Thursday, the entire DOE national complex is involved in a "stand-down" to discuss how we will address problems identified in the Performance Study. Ron Izatt, of my staff, will discuss the Study and our response with you tomorrow afternoon.

This is a critical report and our response is equally critical. I cannot overemphasize DOE's need for constructive advice from this Board and other Hanford stakeholders.

A final thought: Over the years, the Site has been advised by more than 200 independent technical experts and groups, including some of the nation's best scientific minds. In the future, we can and we will call on such individuals and organizations for independent technical review and advice.

I think it would be unfortunate and counter-productive if this Board tried to be one of Hanford's 200 technical advisors.

I do want you to be my one counselor on key policy matters that affect many different interests.

The Future Site Use Working Group and the Tank Waste Task Force succeeded because they were able to focus on broad, over-arching issues; they were able to stay above technical detail and deliver valuable counsel on values and principles.

The Hanford cleanup needs more of that.

I'm sure you're all anxious to attack this ambitious agenda. I'm confident that your collective skills, experience and enthusiasm will provide the momentum you need to move quickly into this and future agendas.

I look forward to a productive relationship with the Hanford Advisory Board. You have my word that I will do everything I can to make this effort a success and a value to all of us.

Thank you.

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