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Ft. Bliss
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M E M O R A N D U M

To: Barbara Hoditschek, Manager, RCRA Permits Program HRMB
From: Cornelius Amindyas, RCRA Permits Writer HRMB
Subject: Fort Bliss Permit Modification Public Meeting, 2/27/96
Date: February 29, 1996

[Signature] 2/29/96

Eleven people attended the informal public meeting including the Chairperson of the Sierra Club, who said that she is also the President of the Western Governor's Association (WGA) for Las Cruces, Southern New Mexico. The rest of the attenders included 3 people from Fort Bliss, 1 person from the US Army Corps of Engineers, 5 people from Roy F. Weston (Fort Bliss' Consultants), and a member of staff from Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau (HRMB) (the writer of this note). The attached list shows the people who attended the public meeting.

All the questions asked and the concerns mentioned were presented by the representative of the Sierra Club/WGA. The following were the concerns brought forward by the Sierra Club:

- (1) Why was the public meeting being held in Dona Ana County instead of in Otero County (Alamogordo) where the Open Detonation unit is located?

My reply to question (1) was that, by NMED regulations, the facility was supposed to hold the public meeting as "near the facility as possible", and Fort Bliss chose Las Cruces. Fort Bliss representatives replied that they felt Las Cruces was nearer the OD unit, and concerns have been expressed in the past by the Sierra Club and Alliance of the Bravo in El Paso, and none from Alamogordo.

- (2) Why is Fort Bliss increasing the volume of waste to be detonated just six months after the permit was issued?

Fort Bliss replied that they did not anticipate getting munitions from Bosnia, until recently, hence the need to increase the amount to be treated.

- (3) Sierra Club wants to know whether the State Line between Texas and New Mexico is clearly marked dividing Texas Fort Bliss from the New Mexico portion of Fort Bliss? Some waste munitions are probably being brought into New Mexico from Texas, under cover of night.

Fort Bliss replied that they don't know, but that 22 million of the 23 million acres occupied by Fort Bliss are in New Mexico, and 1 million acres are in Texas. Texas Fort Bliss only has the administrative headquarters, and the bunkers from which the waste munitions for treatment will be received are in Texas.

- (4) Sierra Club recommended that the proposed permit modification should not be granted, until the Proposed Rule by the EPA on "When Munitions Become Waste?" is passed, or undergoes a Final Ruling.

I replied that I do not make decisions on permit issuance or denials, but the management of NMED makes the final decisions.

- (5) Other Land Management Department such as BLM, the US Army, and the US Forest service should be invited to participate in OD meetings.

I replied that all the departments mentioned were on HRMB mailing list and were invited to participate in our permitting process, and we are yet to receive comments from the said departments.

