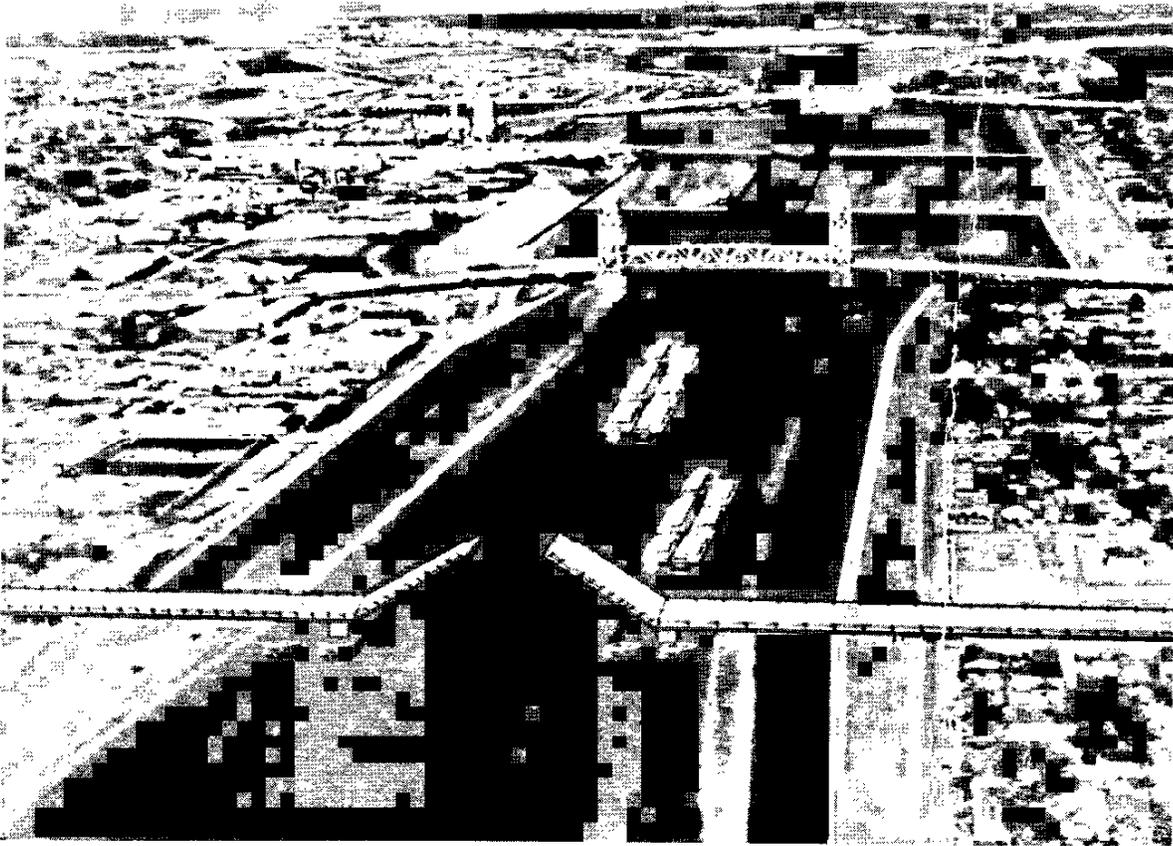




**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**
New Orleans District

Mississippi River - Gulf Outlet

New Lock and Connecting Channels



Evaluation Report

Public Views and Comments

**Volume 9 of 9
Appendix G
March 1997**

**MISSISSIPPI RIVER-GULF OUTLET,
NEW LOCK AND CONNECTING CHANNELS, LOUISIANA
EVALUATION REPORT**

PUBLIC VIEWS AND RESPONSES

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SECTION 1a.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

In The Matter Of:

*PUBLIC MEETING RE INDUSTRIAL LOCK
REPLACEMENT PROJECT*

January 27, 1997

*Professional Shorthand Reporters, Inc.
601 Poydras Street, Suite 1615
Pan-American Life Center
New Orleans, LA United States 70130
(504) 529-5255 FAX: (504) 529-5255*

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Word Index included with this Min-U-Script®

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[5] PUBLIC MEETING
[6] WITH
[7] ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
[8] AND
[9] PORT OF NEW ORLEANS
[10] REGARDING
[11] INNER HARBOR NAVIGATION CANAL
[12] INDUSTRIAL LOCK REPLACEMENT PROJECT
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[19]

[20] Date: Monday, January 27, 1997

[21] Place: Holy Cross School
4950 Dauphine Street

[22] New Orleans, Louisiana
[23]
[24]
[25]

[1] **PROCEEDINGS**

[2]
[3] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[4] I'd like to welcome you
[5] all to tonight's public meeting. This
[6] public meeting is on the Industrial Lock
[7] Replacement Project for the U.S. Army
[8] Corps of Engineers. If you're here for
[9] the post-Superbowl party, you're in the
[10] wrong room. My name is Colonel Bill
[11] Conner. I'm a Commander of the New
[12] Orleans Office of the Corps of Engineers,
[13] and I want to officially welcome you to
[14] tonight's proceedings.

[15] The agenda for this
[16] evening is on the slide posted to your
[17] right. We'll follow this agenda to the
[18] conclusion of the meeting. With me at the
[19] head table for this evening is Mr. Pat
[20] Gallwey, representing our partner for this
[21] project, which is the Port of New Orleans,
[22] and also at the table for the evening's
[23] proceedings is Mr. Joe Dicharry, who is
[24] the project manager for this project out
[25] of my office. At this time, I'd like to

[1] turn the microphone over to Pat for his
[2] opening comments.

[3] **MR. GALLWEY:**

[4] Thanks very much,
[5] Colonel. Good evening to everyone and
[6] welcome. Mr. Brinson, our President and
[7] CEO, is not able to be here tonight. He's
[8] at home with the flu. He sends his
[9] apologies and he asked me to present our
[10] remarks tonight.

[11] The Port of New Orleans
[12] supports the construction of the new lock
[13] project and further strongly supports the
[14] concept of providing mitigation in the
[15] form of community improvements, projects,
[16] programs and compensation. We believe
[17] this project should be and will be
[18] sensitive to the community's needs and
[19] concerns and the mitigation programs
[20] should also be designed and administered
[21] by the people it directly impacts.

[22] Our record on this issue
[23] has been clear. Almost six years ago when
[24] this project was last proposed, it would
[25] have demolished over 200 homes and

[1] relocated some 800 people. The voice of
[2] the residents was heard and the project
[3] was revamped so that there are now no
[4] residential relocations. The ideas of the
[5] neighborhood residents have been
[6] incorporated into the project. The
[7] project has been vastly improved through
[8] listening to the concerns of the residents
[9] and through advances in construction
[10] technology. Concerns about access, design
[11] features of bridges, community housing,
[12] job training, beautification, recreation
[13] projects and many others have been
[14] incorporated into the project. We have
[15] listened to the concerns about isolation
[16] and the need for better access, and we
[17] believe that this project will provide
[18] safe and secure and convenient access to
[19] the residents of the Lower Ninth Ward, the
[20] Holy Cross area and the St. Bernard area
[21] well into the future.

[22] The impacts and the
[23] benefits have been documented. We believe
[24] that it is possible to build this project
[25] so that everyone benefits. The lock is

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[1] the single busiest lock in the nation, and
[2] the delays associated with it increase the
[3] cost of moving goods used to make this
[4] nation strong and competitive. And so we
[5] come together tonight again this evening
[6] to hear your concerns, the concerns of the
[7] people on this most recent plan, and to
[8] listen so that this project can help in
[9] the revitalization of the communities
[10] bordering along the canal. Thank you very
[11] much.

[12] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[13] Thank you. Before we get
[14] to the main portion of the meeting, which
[15] is to hear your comments, the comments of
[16] the public, for purposes of summarizing
[17] the Corps' current idea of what the
[18] project would look like and bringing us
[19] all onto the same sheet of music, we have
[20] a 15-minute video that we would like to
[21] play at this time that kind of lays out
[22] the scope of the project and our current
[23] plan for design. So if I could ask that
[24] the video be run at this time and give
[25] your attention to the screen.

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[1] a period of two years, which would mean
[2] that St. Claude Avenue would not be
[3] available to the communities for that
[4] two-year period. And that seemed to be
[5] pretty unacceptable. So what we did after
[6] Wednesday is we got together and sketched
[7] out a solution to that particular issue,
[8] and that's what you're looking at here,
[9] which is a temporary bridge which will be
[10] put in at St. Claude Avenue. And the idea
[11] is that we would buy an erector set kind
[12] of kit that's available. It's been used a
[13] lot in the Northeast on the interstates
[14] there. We'd buy that. We'd build it next
[15] to the existing bridge and then we'd build
[16] a little tie-in road that would go into
[17] St. Claude Avenue, and that's what that
[18] red line is on the slide. On your
[19] handouts, it's all in black because that's
[20] all's we could get to reproduce was black
[21] and not red. And so what that would mean
[22] is that the St. Claude Avenue would only
[23] be closed during the time it would take us
[24] to physically tie in this new road and
[25] bridge with the existing St. Claude

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[1] (Vidcotape played.)

[2] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[3] That's the plan that we
[4] have right now except there is one change
[5] that we've just recently worked out. I
[6] don't expect you to be able to identify
[7] exactly what that is, but we have
[8] available some photocopies of this slide
[9] that were at the front door when you
[10] walked in, and if you want additional
[11] copies, we can hand those out to you at
[12] this time.

[13] What happened is last
[14] Wednesday, I met with some of the local
[15] interest groups, neighborhood residents
[16] from the community, to talk about the
[17] project a little bit to kind of get me
[18] smart, since I'm new here, and one thing
[19] that was loud and clear to me as a result
[20] of that meeting was that the closure of
[21] the St. Claude Avenue bridge is easily, if
[22] not the biggest sticking point of the
[23] project, one of the biggest. And right
[24] now or up until last Wednesday, we were
[25] talking about that bridge being closed for

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[1] Avenue. And so we're guesstimating at
[2] this time that that would probably take a
[3] couple or three months had to do.
[4] Probably, if we could swing it right, we'd
[5] even want to go ahead and have that happen
[6] over the summer months period so as not to
[7] impact on the school session for the folks
[8] attending Holy Cross School. That may or
[9] may not happen. That's kind of toward the
[10] end of the whole project anyway so it
[11] would be kind of hard to tell at this time
[12] exactly when it would. So that's the only
[13] change from the video is the concept of
[14] attempting to at least keep St. Claude
[15] Avenue open, if not the whole time during
[16] the project, at least a period of time or
[17] most of the time and only have it closed
[18] for a couple of months.
[19] Now, this hasn't been
[20] approved yet. This isn't part of the
[21] 511-million-dollar program. But I have
[22] checked with my bosses and they indicate
[23] that it sounds like a pretty good idea to
[24] them and they're going to go ahead and
[25] carry the torch forward to Washington to

[1] get a final resolution on that. So that's
[2] the only difference from the movie.

[3] These are some of the
[4] folks that we have been working with on
[5] this project. We call them the
[6] Neighborhood Working Group. Some of these
[7] individuals we've spoken to quite a bit.
[8] Some we've only touched on periodically.
[9] And the discussions have lasted a long
[10] time. I mean, they have gone on for
[11] numbers of years. And this is the rest of
[12] the list of the folks that we're currently
[13] calling the group but that was, just to
[14] give you the idea of the flavor of what
[15] we're attempting to do, which is to
[16] provide 100 percent communication between
[17] the Corps and the local interests. And so
[18] if you want to be added to that group or
[19] subtracted, just please let Joe know and
[20] he'll be happy to accommodate you.

[21] What we would like to do
[22] as part of the project is enter into what
[23] we call a formal partnering agreement, and
[24] this agreement would be executed for the
[25] sole purpose of spending the 33 million

[1] dollars of mitigation money that would be
[2] part of the project. And that partnership
[3] would be 50/50 between the Corps and
[4] whoever wants to be part of the group.
[5] And so far we haven't built this group.
[6] We don't have anybody who is a member of
[7] the group yet. We open it up to any and
[8] all volunteers. So if you're interested
[9] in being a player in this, either
[10] representing some particular neighborhood
[11] group or business or faction or interest
[12] or just as a citizen at large, please
[13] again tell Joe that.

[14] I don't know if you can
[15] read his phone number there. What's your
[16] phone number, Joe? 862-1929. That's
[17] 862-1929.

[18] We also are planning to
[19] make all of this work tie in with existing
[20] programs that are ongoing, and we are
[21] familiar with the ones that are shown here
[22] on this slide. As we get more familiar
[23] with the area and learn of other
[24] initiatives, either ongoing or ones that
[25] begin after the project does, we will

[1] attempt to tie in or work with those as
[2] well so there's no duplication of effort.
[3] This is the schedule that
[4] we're going to be working off of for this
[5] project, and I'd like to spend a minute to
[6] go over that with you before we go to the
[7] public comment period. Tonight we have
[8] this public meeting, and this is required
[9] by law but this is not the end of the
[10] official public comments. We will take
[11] everything that you say this evening and
[12] we will include that in for the record.

[13] Now, the official
[14] for-the-record proceedings is the audio
[15] tapes that are being made to your front
[16] here, to the gentleman on my left. That's
[17] the official record for the meeting. Now,
[18] behind you is a video camera that's being
[19] run but it will be turned on and off
[20] during the course of the evening. It's
[21] just there to provide us some additional
[22] assistance. So you can rest assured that
[23] 100 percent of your comments will be
[24] recorded. They'll be recorded audially
[25] and every single person who wants to speak

[1] will have that submitted as part of the
[2] record for the transcript we'll make for
[3] the record.

[4] In addition, if you have
[5] written comments that need to be
[6] submitted, someone handed me one this
[7] evening just before the meeting started,
[8] that's fine, too, and we will accept those
[9] this evening. If you want to read your
[10] comments into the record and then hand
[11] them to us, that's okay. And then after
[12] that, you have until the 24th of February
[13] to submit your written comments to my
[14] office in mail. And so if you don't have
[15] your comments written out tonight but you
[16] want to write them up, that's fine but you
[17] got to get them to me by the 24th. After
[18] the 24th, the comment period for this
[19] meeting is officially closed. And the
[20] reason for that is that I then have to
[21] submit a report through my chain of
[22] command that has to leave my office by the
[23] end of March. So that gives me from the
[24] end of February to the end of March to put
[25] that report together.

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[1] During that time, I will
[2] also be preparing a written response to
[3] every question that's raised either here
[4] at the meeting tonight verbally or through
[5] your written comments, and so you'll all
[6] be receiving answers to your questions
[7] that way. I don't have the time tonight
[8] to be able to go ahead and put together an
[9] oral dialogue nor do I know enough about
[10] the project to be able to answer all your
[11] questions this evening, so you'll receive
[12] written responses to every question that
[13] you have.

[14] That report then goes up
[15] through my chain of command and gets to
[16] Washington, at which time we expect a
[17] response by June of this year. And once
[18] that response is made, that is effectively
[19] the end of the Corps of Engineers'
[20] involvement for this period of time. What
[21] will then happen is the report will be
[22] sent over to the Congress for decision,
[23] and the Congress is the one that decides
[24] as to whether or not this project will go.

[25] Let me explain that

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[1] everything that you saw in the video,
[2] everything you've ever read about this
[3] project, every discussion point that will
[4] be made here tonight, these are all based
[5] on an idea and only an idea. This project
[6] does not have any money right now assigned
[7] to it for the work to be done. That must
[8] be done by the Congress and it has not
[9] been done yet. And, therefore, the
[10] Congress will make one of several
[11] decisions as to what to do with this
[12] project after they receive all of the
[13] input. They'll either decide to go ahead
[14] and fund it or they'll decide to fund it
[15] with some changes or they'll decide not to
[16] fund it at all. Those are basically their
[17] options. I'm sure there are a lot of
[18] other permutations and combinations of
[19] those ideas, but that's basically the gist
[20] of what will happen to it.

[21] That will take place from
[22] the period of June of this year until
[23] October of '98. The 1st of October of '98
[24] is what the government calls the beginning
[25] of fiscal year '99, and if the project in

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[1] its current configuration or some small
[2] modification of that configuration, if
[3] that project is to go forward, then that
[4] will happen with the period that begins
[5] October of '98 or what we call fiscal year
[6] '99. If the project is not funded for
[7] that period of time, then effectively it
[8] goes into limbo and we start over again.

[9] So that's why this
[10] meeting tonight is so important, because
[11] this is a very key opportunity for
[12] everyone here to voice their opinions
[13] about this project. And it's certainly no
[14] secret to the folks at this table that
[15] there is a very strong local opposition to
[16] the project, and we expect to hear that
[17] tonight. In fact, I demand of you to
[18] provide your opposition tonight because
[19] it's very important as part of the
[20] political process that you have the
[21] opportunity to have your say. So please
[22] make your say known. Please speak up,
[23] speak clearly, speak as coherently, get
[24] your point across.

[25] Now, you'll notice that

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[1] the acoustics in this room are not the
[2] greatest. It's the gymnasium. So I ask
[3] that we only have one speaker at a time
[4] and that you give your undivided attention
[5] to that individual so we can make sure
[6] that his or her comments are heard and can
[7] be responded to.

[8] I think that pretty much
[9] covers the time frame on that. And so at
[10] this point, what I would like to do is go
[11] ahead and begin the official comment
[12] portion of the meeting. We'll start with
[13] our elected officials or the designated
[14] representatives. Joe has a list of cards
[15] that have been filled out by individuals
[16] who have asked to speak. They look like
[17] this and they were at the table available
[18] when you came in the front door. If you
[19] didn't fill out a card and you would like
[20] to fill out a card and speak, you're free
[21] to do that any time during the course of
[22] the evening. We won't leave here until
[23] everybody who has asked to speak is given
[24] the opportunity to do that. Therefore, I
[25] sincerely ask you to limit your comments

(1) to a period not to exceed five minutes in
(2) length. That's five minutes. That way we
(3) can get to all of the folks who want to
(4) speak tonight. We'll start with the
(5) elected officials or designated
(6) representatives. We'll work through them,
(7) make sure that every elected member of
(8) either the local or the federal
(9) legislatures has a chance to speak. Then
(10) we'll turn it over to the public at large.

(11) Okay. So at this time,
(12) we'll begin. Right now, Joe tells me that
(13) none of the federal U.S. officials from
(14) the National Congress have asked to speak.
(15) Are there any members in the audience at
(16) this time or the representatives who would
(17) like to make a statement? Okay. Very
(18) good, sir. We will get to you.

(19) All right. With no one
(20) from the federal government here to speak
(21) then, we will turn it over to the state
(22) government for their comments. Who's the
(23) first speaker?

(24) MR. DICHARRY:

(25) The first speaker will be

(1) would assume every time we get a new
(2) district engineer, we're going to have to
(3) go through the process of discussing this
(4) project all over again. This is the first
(5) time that this colonel has had an
(6) opportunity to listen to the community on
(7) this project, so, Colonel, I would imagine
(8) you have to go back and dig up the old
(9) reports and see what they said, and what
(10) you're probably going to find is that the
(11) reports are going to be pretty consistent
(12) with what the people in this community
(13) have said in the past. And I think, and
(14) I'm going to allow the people to speak for
(15) themselves, but I think pretty profoundly
(16) and pretty loudly and pretty
(17) comprehensively, people are going to say
(18) in this community that they don't want
(19) this project.

(20) Now, I frankly don't know
(21) how many times we're going to have to say
(22) that, but I would assume we will say it as
(23) many times as you all want to hear it.
(24) Now, I've been through this many times and
(25) I'm not going to spend a lot of time

(1) Senator John Johnson.

(2) SENATOR JOHNSON:

(3) I'd like to start off by
(4) expressing my appreciation to all of the
(5) residents and the constituents and
(6) individuals who are out on tonight to
(7) listen to the presentation. I would
(8) imagine to many, many people who are here
(9) on tonight, this is not new. You've
(10) probably been through this more times than
(11) you want to come and voice your opinion on
(12) this particular project. I was at a
(13) meeting here last week, and I said to a
(14) small group of individuals on last week
(15) that I can remember when I was 17 years
(16) old, the largest community meeting that I
(17) called down here in the Lower Ninth Ward
(18) had to do with the Industrial Canal and
(19) the possibility of replacing those locks.
(20) Most of you know how old I am today, so I
(21) don't need to tell you my age, but it was
(22) - Tell them? No, no, I'm not going to do
(23) that. It was a long time ago, a long,
(24) long time ago. So we've been discussing
(25) this project now for a long time, and I

(1) rehashing what I said in the past so many
(2) times. I know that one of my colleagues
(3) in the Senate, Senator Dean - Is Senator
(4) Dean here tonight? I know that Senator
(5) Lynn Dean is going to want to have some
(6) comments and some things that he's going
(7) to want to say. He's a newly elected
(8) senator from the St. Bernard-Plaquemines
(9) area and he's going to have some very
(10) strong comments to make on this project on
(11) tonight. I hope you all would give him
(12) the time to make his presentation and to
(13) listen to what he has to say.

(14) But I just want to say,
(15) as the senator whose district that the
(16) project or the proposed project is located
(17) in and as the state senator in whose
(18) senatorial district the present locks are
(19) located in, I am going to represent the
(20) views, the needs and the concerns of my
(21) constituents. And I think from having
(22) represented this district and this
(23) community in the state legislature for a
(24) number of years, I know how the people
(25) feel.

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(1) Now, I frankly think as
(2) one voter in this district that it is an
(3) *insult for the Corps of Engineers to come*
(4) into this community and talk about the
(5) possibility of bringing a half-a-billion-
(6) dollar project into this community and by
(7) the time the project is developed, if it
(8) were to be developed, which it won't, but
(9) if it were to be developed, it would be a
(10) billion-dollar project, at least a
(11) billion-dollar project, and to talk about
(12) a mediation program of 33 million dollars,
(13) *that is an insult. 33 million dollars*
(14) would not even pay for the problem and the
(15) losses that the businesses will lose or
(16) experience in this community over the 10
(17) to 12 years that they would be negatively
(18) impacted. And I see Miss Morris over here
(19) clapping, who is a business lady in this
(20) community. She knows what I'm talking
(21) about. And there are several small
(22) business people in this community who own
(23) small businesses who have worked all of
(24) their lives to get their businesses to
(25) where they are today. 33 million dollars

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(1) wouldn't even come close to helping those
(2) people experience the kind of losses that
(3) they would experience if this project were
(4) to become a reality.
(5) So I would strongly
(6) suggest to you that if, with the crooked
(7) *letter, if you want to continue to talk*
(8) about this project, and I'm not suggesting
(9) in any way, shape or form that I support
(10) the project, but if you want to continue
(11) to talk about it, you talk about putting
(12) at least 500 million dollars on the table
(13) so that every house in this community that
(14) needs to be renovated or replaced will be
(15) replaced, every street that needs to be
(16) replaced, so that this community can look
(17) like a model community, then you might be
(18) able to do a little talking. And I would
(19) think that it would take at least a half a
(20) billion dollars in order to do that, at
(21) least 500 million dollars, at least.
(22) Now, that's the point
(23) that I want to make to you all as the Port
(24) of New Orleans and the Corps of Engineers,
(25) and let me just say that you all are my

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(1) friends. The Port of New Orleans is a
(2) state agency. I'm a state senator. I
(3) work very closely with the Port of New
(4) Orleans. Any time they need money to
(5) enhance the port in order to create jobs
(6) and economic development, I try to work
(7) with them in order to get the money
(8) because I know what that port means to
(9) this community and to this state. The
(10) Corps of Engineers, which is a federal
(11) agency, as a state elected official, I try
(12) to work with them. But let's stop
(13) *hassling the community. Let's stop*
(14) *insulting the people in this community*
(15) *with this project. If the people have*
(16) *said unequivocally that they don't want*
(17) *the project, leave it alone.*
(18) **COLONEL CONNER:**
(19) Thank you, Senator.
(20) Appreciate those comments.
(21) At the meeting last
(22) Wednesday that the Senator refers to, the
(23) comment was made that this discussion has
(24) gone on through 15 Corps of Engineers
(25) colonels who have sat in my chair. And

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(1) I'm here to tell you tonight that that's
(2) not true. There were 16 because I counted
(3) them today. So it was pretty close
(4) though.
(5) Who is the next speaker?
(6) **MR. DICHARRY:**
(7) *Next speaker will be*
(8) Senator Lynn Dean.
(9) **SENATOR DEAN:**
(10) Good evening, gentlemen,
(11) ladies and gentlemen. Thanks for the
(12) privilege. I have some comments here
(13) that's written down. They take me a
(14) little over five minutes. I hope that's
(15) allowed.
(16) Why don't we start off
(17) with saying I'm strongly disappointed that
(18) with all the technology we have in the
(19) world today, all the engineering we have
(20) in the world today, that we say we're
(21) going to do a project like this that's
(22) going to take 12 years and that for a
(23) couple of years' period a certain bridge
(24) may be down, a couple years' period
(25) another bridge may be down, and when you

[1] get through, you'll have a project that
[2] bridges still go up and down. You're
[3] going to have a set of locks there that's
[4] much bigger than it was before so there
[5] will be a longer period while those boats
[6] go in and out. I don't think you're going
[7] to speed up any of them boats. Fact of
[8] the matter, if the regulations keep up,
[9] we'll slow them down a little bit. So
[10] when you put all that together, it's time
[11] for us to stop and go back to the drawing
[12] board instead with our technology and our
[13] engineering and say there's ways to do
[14] things better.

[15] Most of us do not want
[16] change, yet the only way to improve our
[17] society is by meaningful change. I
[18] started to say many citizens of St.
[19] Bernard, but after talking to them a few
[20] days, I'd have to say most of the citizens
[21] or all of the citizens of St. Bernard do
[22] not want a canal, a cut if you will, in
[23] St. Bernard Parish. We remember the
[24] Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, that nasty
[25] erodic cut that daily proves it was a

[1] mistake. St. Bernard citizens were
[2] promised industry with good-paying jobs
[3] for our citizens and our children. I just
[4] now heard you all talking about promising
[5] some jobs. You didn't mention the fact
[6] that you're going to wipe out the Galvez
[7] Street dock and all these areas in there
[8] that's furnishing jobs and they'll be
[9] gone. But we can forget about all the
[10] investment we got in the Galvez Street
[11] dock, and as a little boy about 12 years
[12] old back in the '40s, the '30s, I used to
[13] see 50 to 100 barges tied there, the
[14] Mississippi Valley Barge Line, the Federal
[15] Barge Line, loading and unloading barges
[16] there all the time, and I was working for
[17] a company called the Red River Barge Line
[18] and we'd come in there and picked up cargo
[19] there. But that's going to be all gone
[20] and dead.

[21] Today, over 30 years
[22] later, not one industry is on the MRGO.
[23] Not one job came from the MRGO. But we
[24] had to build an expensive levee to provide
[25] us protection in St. Bernard from

[1] hurricane flooding. The MRGO still harmed
[2] our parish where the levee was never built
[3] at Reggio, Florissant, Ycloskey and
[4] Hopedale. These are people live there.
[5] Sometimes school buses pick up children or
[6] do not pick up children due to flood
[7] waters caused by high tides coming up the
[8] MRGO. The taxpayers of our parish have
[9] paid over four million dollars to build
[10] some levees out there that we didn't need
[11] before, and now we still owe about seven
[12] million dollars that the federal
[13] government hasn't forgive that extra debt.
[14] And St. Bernard got nothing for all of
[15] that. St. Bernard does not want another
[16] cut. Neither does St. Bernard want 11
[17] years of delay caused by construction on
[18] three bridges at St. Claude, Claiborne
[19] Avenue and Florida Avenue.
[20] And you've made a nice
[21] little statement. You're saying, well,
[22] only one bridge will be shut down at that
[23] particular time. That's the delay you'll
[24] have. You forgot to mention how much
[25] you're going to jam the traffic on them

[1] other bridges, which means there will be
[2] jammed traffic in there for several years
[3] on all the bridges you make. People's
[4] time are worth money and the fuel and oil
[5] in the cars are worth money, and I don't
[6] know how many hundreds of millions that
[7] will be before it's over with but that
[8] adds up to quite a bit. In the final
[9] analysis, we'll still have, the final
[10] result, we'll still have to stop for
[11] raised bridges when the ships and
[12] equipment goes through.
[13] Yet, if we want progress
[14] and the jobs and a better living which
[15] comes with it, some changes must be made.
[16] History accords that in 1825, the Erie
[17] Canal in New York State was the first
[18] canal built in the United States. And it
[19] made New York State all the greater,
[20] helping to develop the economy all the way
[21] to the Great Lakes. It was so successful,
[22] it was made wider and deeper several
[23] times. One of the greatest engineering
[24] feats that was done by the United States
[25] was when it built the Panama Canal, a

(1) canal cut on a continental scale as it cut
(2) North America in two from South America.
(3) But the United States did the job, and the
(4) same can be said for the Suez Canal. The
(5) United States built the Gulf Intracoastal
(6) Waterway which extends from Brownsville,
(7) Texas and New Orleans to St. Marks,
(8) Florida. That canal system carries
(9) several hundred times probably more
(10) freight than people ever dreamed it would.
(11) It had proved a great advantage to our
(12) economy of the United States and
(13) particularly was benefitive to the
(14) economies of Texas, Louisiana,
(15) Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. It has
(16) helped our nation's economy grow and has
(17) furnished thousands of people good jobs
(18) all the way around.

(19) So, if done right, we can
(20) benefit from new canals. We need more
(21) bigger and better locks and waterways to
(22) handle the increased traffic and large
(23) barges and ships which in turn employ more
(24) people and reduce the price of goods you
(25) buy at the store.

(1) You know, today we're
(2) talking about fixing this lock, and we're
(3) going to go back to the technology and the
(4) faults of transportation of World War II.
(5) But since that time the ships have gotten
(6) bigger, they draw more water, but the
(7) canals on the other side of this lock are
(8) not deep enough so you're not going to do
(9) that. So we're going to do a patch-up job
(10) or a band-aid job on a thing that's
(11) outmoded when the modern day's
(12) transportation with the RO-RO ships and
(13) the big container ships, some of them that
(14) draws 50 to 60 foot of water, the big
(15) tankers, nothing's going to be done about
(16) that kind of thing at all. We're not even
(17) talking about the Mississippi River, which
(18) should carry traffic from the Gulf of
(19) Mexico all the way up to Baton Rouge of
(20) ships drawing 60 feet. We're not doing
(21) anything about that.

(22) So we're going to let the
(23) New Orleans area, our port, the greatest
(24) in the world, should be, lag behind and
(25) try to do the same thing from World War

(1) II. It's like we tried to fight World War
(2) II with the equipment of World War I till
(3) we got our tanks and stuff and got out
(4) there about it. We need to modernize
(5) ourselves. As a state senator, as an
(6) industrialist, as a consumer and as an
(7) American, I realize that good changes
(8) should be made.

(9) First let us consider
(10) truly the proposed changes on the
(11) Industrial Canal locks is a poor band-aid
(12) for a massive problem. The problem is the
(13) delay all citizens of the Ninth Ward and
(14) Orleans Parish and St. Bernard have to
(15) endure while waiting on the bridges that
(16) go up. That problem is reflected in the
(17) cost we as motorists bear in wasted time
(18) or in wasted gasoline spent idling in
(19) line, the cost of wasted time for towboats
(20) and ships waiting for locks to open and
(21) close and for bridges to raise and lower.
(22) We all share those costs in the way of
(23) higher prices for our electric power,
(24) manufactured goods and food, and yes, the
(25) loss of our valuable time spent in

(1) waiting. We need a solution that
(2) eliminates all three costs, if possible,
(3) and it is possible.
(4) For instance, let us
(5) raise the St. Claude bridge to the heighth
(6) of the Claiborne bridge and, likewise,
(7) raise the Florida Avenuc bridge to the
(8) heighth of the Claiborne bridge and then
(9) weld all three bridges shut so it will
(10) never open and close again. That way
(11) automotive traffic will never stop because
(12) some boat or some barge goes through
(13) there. That's no big technology to do
(14) that.

(15) Of course, at the same
(16) time or before you do that, you need to
(17) build a canal that the taller ships and
(18) marine equipment can go through. And if
(19) you do that though, you should design this
(20) new canal with a high-rise, never-to-open
(21) bridge in place before we start digging
(22) the canal so that people that live on the
(23) other side of that canal, if it ever gets
(24) dug, will never have one hour's delay at
(25) all to get across it. This, simply said,

(1) we'll build a bridge first, tie the
(2) four-lane road into it first, and when you
(3) build your locks, let's be a little
(4) innovative on it. St. Bernard has two
(5) main arterics, St. Bernard Highway and
(6) Judge Perez Drive. You build that
(7) high-level bridge for Judge Perez Drive
(8) and build it before the canal is there so
(9) people can actually drive across the
(10) bridge and look down while you're doing
(11) all your work, even be curious about it.
(12) They won't be mad because they're delayed
(13) every time you turn around for something
(14) like that.

(15) When you build the locks,
(16) make your lock gates strong enough to
(17) carry bridge traffic right across them.
(18) The way you operate locks always, with
(19) very few exceptions, one set of lock gates
(20) are closed. So if you have two sets of
(21) lock gates and you tie the roads in right,
(22) a little old red light and a green light
(23) will tell the guy which one's open and he
(24) can always drive through and never have to
(25) wait.

(1) So what you do, you build
(2) your locks first, your gates first. You
(3) build your bridges first. Get all that
(4) work. And then after all that's done
(5) right, then you go dig your canal. And
(6) there wouldn't be any delay. In the
(7) meantime, all the people up in Orleans and
(8) Ninth Ward or whatnot would never see a
(9) delay whatsoever and their economy and
(10) their business could go right on growing.
(11) Before the canal is dug, build the lock
(12) gates so designed as to carry two-way
(13) traffic on either lock gate so if one gate
(14) is open, the traffic could go to the other
(15) gate, and when it is turned open, the
(16) traffic go onto the other gate. This
(17) means never will both gates be open at the
(18) same time, which helps traffic always.

(19) When all this is done,
(20) then and only then will we dig the canal
(21) or the cut, if you will. Of course you
(22) must have two levees which prevent a
(23) rising river or a hurricane from harming
(24) the people. The levees must be far enough
(25) apart that fabricating plants and other

(1) businesses needing deep-water
(2) transportaion can locate on each side so
(3) we can have good-paying jobs for our
(4) citizens without harm to our environment.

(5) This goes back to the
(6) MRGO. We promised them all those plants
(7) and equipment. Yet the Corps of Engineers
(8) and others made regulations where you
(9) couldn't have the land on either side to
(10) build a dock, only thing you let the ships
(11) go by, but yet you had promised people all
(12) these good-paying jobs with these big
(13) plants. Of course, today they have no
(14) faith in what we say or you say or even
(15) me, I guess, because of how we've been
(16) lied to, they've been lied to in the past.

(17) To mitigate the anxiety
(18) and improve the looks of the area, we
(19) could use this area also to build some
(20) nice parks and such for the benefit of
(21) people. And most important is when that
(22) canal cut is made, if it's made in St.
(23) Bernard Parish, the money will have to be
(24) certified in advance to close off and dam
(25) up the MRGO cut forever. In fact, unless

(1) that money's tied up where it cannot be
(2) siphoned off somewhere else, I will fight
(3) it till the end. But we should start,
(4) after the canal's in there, at the mouth
(5) of the MRGO and dam it off with a dam and
(6) cover the rocks so it could never wear
(7) through. Then we should go upstream on
(8) that MRGO to the old Bayou le Loutre and
(9) build a dam on both sides of that near the
(10) MRGO and let Bayou la Loutre go on out in
(11) the Gulf like it always did. And then we
(12) should come up that canal to the Bayou
(13) Ycloskey. At Bayou Ycloskey, when the
(14) MRGO is cut, you cut a road in two and you
(15) make the value of people's property go to
(16) pot. We should build two dams across it
(17) at that point. The dam on the eastern
(18) side should then be the new road built on
(19) it and repair that road that's already
(20) there, put the water lines and things back
(21) in so that piece of property all the way
(22) out to Lake Borgne could be used again.
(23) That would only be fair.

(24) I can remember when we
(25) built the canal back there then, and these

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[1] people that own land that the canal was
[2] dug on got paid for it. There was one
[3] wise gentleman, name of Joe Meraux, since
[4] deceased, made a headline in the Picayune
[5] that he got paid more for a little piece
[6] of property he had near the Violet Canal
[7] for the MRGO cut than all the other land
[8] owners combined. That was injustice to
[9] the other land owners I'm sure. I'm sure
[10] Mr. Meraux got fair treatment. But the
[11] point is, we should correct those wrongs
[12] and make those people's land back valuable
[13] again.

[14] And then, finally, we'll
[15] close off the MRGO next to where your cut
[16] is, and when that's done, you'll have a
[17] bunch of freshwater lakes in there that
[18] the tide cannot go back and forth and
[19] erode away. If you'll remember right, I
[20] believe my figure's correct, that channel
[21] was at one time 36 foot deep and about 500
[22] foot wide. Today you've got places 2,000
[23] foot wide. Today it's gotten so bad
[24] you'll be able to eat into that levee and
[25] the whole levee will collapse, so now

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[1] you're spending multi millions of dollars
[2] to put rocks around them to protect them.
[3] And we're going to have to do more of
[4] that.
[5] Ladies and gentlemen, I
[6] will support such construction only if all
[7] the financing is arranged so that it is
[8] completed to eliminate the dangers to our
[9] citizens, to stop the waste of their time
[10] and stop the economic waste to our economy
[11] of a canal that frustrates all of us, some
[12] on a daily basis. I will rigorously
[13] oppose a new Industrial Canal lock that
[14] will destroy the Galvez Street dock, and
[15] the same thing goes for the other side.
[16] Industry should be allowed to work there
[17] to give good-paying jobs to people,
[18] industry that doesn't hurt the
[19] environment, doesn't pollute the air or
[20] what have you. But when you put this big
[21] set of locks in there the way you're
[22] talking about doing it, it's a mess-up.
[23] If you did it the way I'm talking about
[24] it, then you could weld down those bridges
[25] and people could say forever they don't

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[1] have to wait for a bridge to go through
[2] there. Isn't it terrible to talk about
[3] the advanced economy of the United States
[4] of America, the richest nation on earth,
[5] that we're telling people, you got to come
[6] up and stop every day of your life at that
[7] bridge if a boat has to go through there..
[8] And then you're telling boats, who should
[9] keep our economy going and keep our costs
[10] down in transportation costs, you have to
[11] come up there and wait, like you said, 10
[12] hours to 30 hours. Some of those boats
[13] are worth \$200, \$500 an hour. And if you
[14] hold one ten hours for two, that's just
[15] \$2,000. If you've got piles and piles of
[16] them all the time, that adds up to that
[17] billion dollars in a few years' time that
[18] could easily do all this right.

[19] So if we use our
[20] technology and engineering correct, we can
[21] do all these jobs without hurting these
[22] people at all, without harming their
[23] businesses, and at the same time make it
[24] so that they'd never have to wait for
[25] another bridge to go up and down. And if

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[1] we do the job right in St. Bernard, if
[2] that's where you put this cut, put those
[3] bridges in advance. Make it a crime for
[4] anybody to start to dig a cut until those
[5] bridges are in place, those locks are in
[6] place, where the traffic could go through.
[7] Certainly I didn't speak
[8] about it, there's a railroad bridge that's
[9] got to be taken care of there. He can't
[10] be the high-level thing but you can put
[11] lock gates there where he goes through the
[12] levee and he comes on across there to keep
[13] that economy going for down the river
[14] where they need that kind of traffic. All
[15] these things can be done by your ability
[16] of engineering and technology and bring
[17] back to the people some faith in our
[18] government that's that so severely
[19] stressed them when they did that MRGO. I
[20] thank you.

COLONEL CONNER:

[21] Thank you, sir.
[22] Appreciate it. Who is our next speaker?
[23] MR. DICHARRY:
[24] State Representative
[25]

[1] Sherman Copeland.
[2] **REPRESENTATIVE COPELAND:**
[3] To the Colonel and the
[4] Dock Board and all of my constituents and
[5] all the visitors from St. Bernard, you
[6] know, I started not to come up here, and
[7] the reason why I started not to come up
[8] here is because I've been doing this for
[9] 32 years now. And I really think that you
[10] ought to just shut that screen down and
[11] leave. Now, the problem I have with this
[12] whole process is that you stand here and
[13] I'd like for you at some point in the
[14] discussion to tell everybody in here how
[15] much it cost to produce that film that we
[16] saw for 15 minutes at the beginning. I'm
[17] willing to bet you you've already spent 50
[18] million dollars trying to shove it down my
[19] constituents' throat for the last 32-plus
[20] years. Now, before you came, Colonel, we
[21] had these public hearings. I have videos
[22] produced by your shop. I have audio and
[23] tape where there was a complete process
[24] and everybody unanimously said no, and
[25] then you come back. The film talks about

[1] there will still be disruption. Now, I
[2] would hope that one thing comes out of
[3] this, and that is that you write a report
[4] that just says no. That's all. Because I
[5] heard rumors floating around that the Dock
[6] Board was going to pass the baton to the
[7] Department of Transportation and
[8] Development. I guess the heat is getting
[9] too hot. They going to pass it on. Well,
[10] I don't know exactly what that means.
[11] What you ought to do and
[12] what we will do and what I hope everybody
[13] in here does is call Senator Breaux, call
[14] Senator Landrieu, call Congressman
[15] Jefferson, Livingston, Tauzin, and say,
[16] "Balance the budget. Don't waste the
[17] taxpayers' dollars." Now, they're all my
[18] friends, but let me tell you. They made a
[19] promise last year, they was going to bail
[20] out the Medicaid program, and now they're
[21] telling the State, if you don't raise
[22] taxes, we're not going to bail out the
[23] Medicaid program any more.
[24] You're talking about 30
[25] million dollars. I'm like the Senator.

[1] authorizations. There's no authorization.
[2] The Congress hadn't put a dime into this,
[3] not one nickel into this. And if they're
[4] going to balance the budget, they're
[5] surely not going to balance it by starting
[6] new projects like this for some special
[7] interest group who happens to have a trust
[8] fund somewhere. It's only going to have a
[9] 15 percent impact on the state from what I
[10] understand. That's all.
[11] Now, I know you weren't
[12] here, but some of the people in this room
[13] remember 1965, Hurricane Retsy. They
[14] remember that and all of the promises that
[15] were made with that. This project is
[16] going to make the land-based casino look
[17] like kindergarten. Ten years? Twenty
[18] years. Five hundred million dollars?
[19] Probably two billion.
[20] Now I want to tell you,
[21] when it got time to fix Tennessee Street
[22] from Florida to Claiborne, it was a
[23] nightmare. It was a nightmare. Can you
[24] imagine what this is going to do to this
[25] neighborhood? I'll be dead and gone and

[1] If it was a billion dollars, unless the
[2] money was in the bank, no deal. I mean,
[3] this is ridiculous. This is an insult.
[4] It's like taking trees off St. Charles
[5] Avenue, or what happened to Claiborne
[6] Avenue. How many false promises? You all
[7] ought to quit, go home, stop. Just leave
[8] the people alone. Now, either you think
[9] you got the most awesome power in the
[10] world or we have none. and my position is
[11] now, I'm not coming to any more public
[12] hearings. You can call them all you want.
[13] The next public hearing I'm going to is
[14] going to be in Washington, D.C. I mean,
[15] you take all these fancy stuff and books
[16] and package them up and send them to the
[17] United States Congress and the United
[18] States senators. Those folks in this room
[19] arc not at those meetings. And if you
[20] look at this, you'd think it was a great
[21] project. Why don't you send them the
[22] tapes of the last 30 years? Any
[23] congressman with good sense would say,
[24] "Hey, we ought not continue to waste our
[25] money like this."

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(1) Now, I understand the
(2) special interest power. I understand the
(3) shipping industry. I understand
(4) everybody, I understand all the
(5) consultants in here who can make some
(6) pretty good bucks off this. But I also
(7) understand people in my district. I
(8) understand Mrs. Leontine Luke who called
(9) me last week, said, "Sherman, I'm ill. I
(10) can't come. We've been fighting this
(11) thing half my lifetime. Please don't let
(12) it happen."

(13) Now, I'd just like for
(14) you to tell us before you leave, publicly,
(15) with the cameras rolling, if in fact it's
(16) documented that a majority of the people
(17) in this district do not want this project,
(18) that you will go before the United States
(19) Congress, Colonel, and say, "We should
(20) cease and desist, abandon the mission. No
(21) go." Now, if you're not prepared to say
(22) that tonight, then we're all just kind of
(23) being taken for a ride, because no matter
(24) what we say, you're going to package your
(25) dog-and-pony show and try to argue along

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(1) with the shipping industry to the Congress
(2) that they ought to just level the road and
(3) run over us.

(4) Now, I got to tell you,
(5) that won't happen. It will not happen.
(6) But it's an insult for you to even attempt
(7) it on whatever banner you want to put it.
(8) 15 colonels later, or is it 16? You're
(9) 16. I'm not impressed. Nothing personal.
(10) But it's an insult to send 16 military
(11) colonels to my little district to try and
(12) wipe it out like it's the Guadal Canal or
(13) something. I mean, what's the deal?
(14) There's got to be something else going on
(15) that we haven't heard about. I don't
(16) understand it. I mean, people need to
(17) talk a little louder.

(18) I mean, let's put all the
(19) cards on the table and not that. I don't
(20) understand that. And I would hope that we
(21) have those kind of discussions because
(22) sooner or later, we're going to have them.
(23) If we don't have them tonight, we're going
(24) to have them somewhere. I'm on a crusade
(25) now. I used to be objective about it. I

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(1) think an elected official ought to be
(2) objective. I have been objective for the
(3) last decade. I am no longer objective. I
(4) want it stopped. If you want to go put it
(5) somewhere else, that's fine. If you want
(6) to pack your bags and go home, that's
(7) fine. Not personally. I mean, I hope you
(8) love our beautiful town and your wife and
(9) family enjoys it and you stay here and we
(10) have a great time. Just fold the
(11) briefcase that says widen the Industrial
(12) Canal in this area. That's all.

(13) Now, I'm going to close
(14) by saying this. I think also when you put
(15) that film, because I understand that some
(16) of the churches, they were saying there
(17) would be no relocation. What happened
(18) was, the first plan didn't want to
(19) interrupt the traffic, so they was going
(20) to wipe out everything from Deslonde on
(21) over to Caffin or Forstall, which was
(22) completely foolish. And then they say,
(23) "Oop, too much opposition." So all of a
(24) sudden, I think your Hyde-Ebasco - Is
(25) that the name of the firm? Ebasco, paid

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(1) them all this money and they came up with
(2) that brilliant idea, we're going to float
(3) the lock in. Well, if they knew that, why
(4) didn't they do that in the first place?

(5) But that's not where the
(6) displacement takes place. It's the
(7) bridges. Nobody's talk- - I didn't see
(8) one thing on there about bridges. Tell me
(9) how you expand Florida, St. Claude and/or
(10) Claiborne without disruption. That's the
(11) disruption. That's the displacement that
(12) nobody talks about. It's impossible. You
(13) know it and I know it. You've got two
(14) choices. Either you have the displacement
(15) and you have an antiquated project the day
(16) you finish, or you do not have the
(17) displacement - or you do have the
(18) displacement and you do it right. In
(19) order to do it right, you've got to wipe
(20) out the neighborhood. You can't
(21) compromise it.

(22) Now, we have money in the
(23) budget. You need to understand this. We
(24) put money in the budget. Nothing to do
(25) with the feds, state general fund money.

[1] to build a new bridge at Florida. And
[2] guess what I found out at a meeting up at
[3] the Corps last week? Unless the
[4] legislature reauthorizes the time program,
[5] which means raising some more taxes or
[6] extending taxes, they don't even have
[7] enough money to finish that one. Now,
[8] remember what happened? If you have this
[9] penny sales tax on gas, never again will
[10] you have to come up with another nickel to
[11] fix the highways in Louisiana. It didn't
[12] work then and it's not going to work now.
[13] Any congress at any time can come anywhere
[14] and change anything they want to do.
[15] My good friend, Bob
[16] Livingston, was a freshman United States
[17] congressman when this thing first started.
[18] Now he's Chairman of the Appropriations
[19] Committee. You know how long that's been.
[20] And then he introduced an amendment to the
[21] bill so it couldn't go down to St. Bernard
[22] or Senator Dean. Smart move. Well, maybe
[23] we ought to start a little disruptions and
[24] some introductions.
[25] Now, my five minutes is

[1] up but I really want to hear what others
[2] are going to say, so I'm going to sit down
[3] and shut up. But I want you to just keep
[4] it simple and go to Congress and just say
[5] no. Can you say that? Do you all know
[6] how to say that? Just say no. Just say
[7] no. Say no.

[8] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[9] Thank you, sir. Eloquent
[10] as always. Do we have any other state
[11] officials, Joe?

[12] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[13] State Representative
[14] Tommy Warner.

[15] **REPRESENTATIVE WARNER:**

[16] Thank you. I'll be much
[17] briefer, I promise. You won't have to
[18] worry about that.

[19] Basically, I came to
[20] listen. I wasn't going to say a whole
[21] lot. My main objective was to make sure
[22] that we play a little defense here for St.
[23] Bernard Parish because I heard some things
[24] could happen as far as St. Bernard Parish
[25] goes. So I didn't hear that. I didn't

[1] see that today. Senator Dean said
[2] something about Bayou le Loutre and Bayou
[3] Ycloskey and all that. I don't know what
[4] his thoughts are on that and I don't think
[5] he was quite clear on that, but anything
[6] that happens in St. Bernard we have a deep
[7] concern with. In my estimation and what
[8] we think should happen and what we're
[9] concerned about is something that
[10] Representative Copeland just said, you
[11] know, you might have to have some
[12] displacement.
[13] Well, we think without
[14] all of that we're looking at perhaps a
[15] high-rise facility or bridge that would
[16] traverse this canal, and I don't want to
[17] tell you exactly where to put it. I think
[18] there are some different locations and all
[19] that. But we think before you do
[20] anything, if you are going to do anything,
[21] and whether you're going to do anything
[22] with the canal or the locks or anything
[23] else, we believe we need a high-rise
[24] bridge. We'd like to run it along that
[25] Florida Avenue canal up in there and have

[1] something that also lets the traffic get
[2] off in the Ninth Ward, Lower Ninth Ward,
[3] as well as at Paris Road. We think that
[4] will be a tremendous asset for us not only
[5] for hurricane evacuation but for economic
[6] development, and that's our call here and
[7] we hope that you will look at that as
[8] perhaps anything you're going to do out
[9] there.

[10] The only other thing I
[11] would say, I'd just have to agree, I
[12] looked at a plan tonight and I see twelve
[13] years divided into six and then five and
[14] then two years of displacement or
[15] priorities and all that, and all I came
[16] out of it was some low-level bridges which
[17] causes us about the same amount of problem
[18] or more as somebody said than what we
[19] presently have. So if we're going to do
[20] anything - and we put up some time money.
[21] The State put up some time money. As
[22] Representative Copeland said, we already
[23] have 33 million dollars in the pot for
[24] that. You give us a little bit of that
[25] federal money, put that there, put a

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(1) high-rise, and I think we'll do much
(2) better. Thank you.

(3) **COLONEL CONNER:**

(4) Thank you for your brief
(5) comments, sir. Who's next?

(6) **MR. DICHARRY:**

(7) Representative Ken
(8) Odinet.

(9) **REPRESENTATIVE ODINET:**

(10) Thank you, gentlemen, for
(11) giving me this opportunity to speak. I'm
(12) a little younger than Sherman is. I've
(13) only been at this for about ten years so
(14) - I've been making some notes on your
(15) dates that you intend to have your plan to
(16) Washington. We met last week with some of
(17) the delegation from Washington, some of
(18) their representatives, in an attempt to go
(19) ahead and get the Florida Avenue project
(20) under way and get a high-rise bridge at
(21) Florida so we can tie in the intermodal
(22) highway from 610 all the way to 510 and
(23) ultimately across the river. So we think,
(24) if we can get this moving by the dates you
(25) have in here or some type of commitment

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(1) was made in the presentation as to what
(2) happens to the so-called high-rise as it
(3) leaves the Industrial Canal and comes into
(4) our district. That's totally unacceptable
(5) to us. We want it stated on the record
(6) here tonight that we oppose any high-rise
(7) coming into District 101 to disrupt the
(8) community we have at Florida Avenue. We
(9) do not want our businesses along that
(10) corridor killed by a high-rise. Those
(11) people have been there for years. There's
(12) nothing in your presentation that
(13) addressed them, nothing. High-rise.
(14) absolutely not. Thank you.

(15) **COLONEL CONNER:**

(16) Thank you, sir.

(17) **MR. DICHARRY:**

(18) State Representative

(19) Arthur Morrell.

(20) **REPRESENTATIVE MORRELL:**

(21) Good evening, Colonel,
(22) other guests and constituents. Colonel,
(23) I've been standing in the back there and
(24) listening to what some of the speakers
(25) have been saying, but I've been looking

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(1) that you could probably have this
(2) high-rise in ready to go before you start
(3) displacing the existing bridges and
(4) causing some inconvenience, I think that
(5) would make your project a lot more
(6) palatable and it would keep your project
(7) out of Bayou Ycloskey. Thank you.

(8) **COLONEL CONNER:**

(9) Thank you.

(10) **MR. DICHARRY:**

(11) Edward Johnson,
(12) Legislative Assistant, State
(13) Representative District 101.

(14) **MR. JOHNSON:**

(15) Good evening, I
(16) represent the representative from District
(17) 101 out of 101, and that abuts District
(18) 99, Sherman Copeland's district.
(19) Effectively, the Florida Avenue high-rise
(20) will come through our district. The
(21) representative in that district, Naomi
(22) Farve, has instructed me to inform all of
(23) you here in the Holy Cross area that we
(24) generally support the constituents of Holy
(25) Cross but, at the same time, no mention

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(1) around and trying to look at the reaction
(2) of the people sitting out here. And let
(3) me say, this is a prime example, of the
(4) seriousness of what you plan to do. Look
(5) at the people out here now. This is a
(6) serious gathering here. This is a real
(7) expression of whether or not they want to
(8) have those locks enlarged, moved or what
(9) have you. You know, I've been living in
(10) this city for 53 years, and I look at
(11) progress as something that's going to help
(12) the community. But I'm still waiting for
(13) that progress to help the community.
(14) You know, years ago, and
(15) someone mentioned it before, down
(16) Claiborne Avenue used to be one of the
(17) thriving small business areas in the city.
(18) 25 years ago, they had almost a million
(19) people in New Orleans only. Now it's less
(20) than a half a million. Why? Progress.
(21) They brought in I-10, I-610. They put
(22) high-rises. They come into the city, they
(23) work and they leave. You're looking at
(24) people here who live here. This is their
(25) community. All they want you to do is

(1) say, "Listen, we want to know what you
(2) want to stop disrupting your community.
(3) We want to keep you where you are."
(4) You're going to move these people out of
(5) the City of New Orleans where they want to
(6) make it their home, and all they want to
(7) say is, "We've been expressing this for
(8) years."

(9) I used to live a half a
(10) mile from here in 1965 when Betsy came and
(11) they were talking about the locks then.
(12) Nothing has happened. I know you're just
(13) one of a succession that may come in, and
(14) I made the crack early on that maybe if
(15) you get an approval, you may make general,
(16) and that's just a comment. But because of
(17) the seriousness of it, you got to take
(18) what these people are saying just by being
(19) here. They don't have to get up and say
(20) anything. Just by being here is showing
(21) that it's a concern enough for them to
(22) come out here in this hot building and
(23) really express their views on what is
(24) planned. I'm here because this is going
(25) to touch on a part of my district. I'm

(1) here because this is my city. I'm here
(2) because if any progress is going to be
(3) done, let it be for the communities, not
(4) for anyone else.

(5) We're talking about the
(6) Florida corridor. What is that going to
(7) do? That's progress. All that's going to
(8) be is another escape route for people to
(9) leave New Orleans. But people really want
(10) to stay here, make this their home. It's
(11) a good city and it's one of the few cities
(12) that have generations after generations
(13) staying in the city, not growing up and
(14) moving out.

(15) So if anything, please
(16) remember this: The community is speaking.
(17) Listen to what we're saying and go back
(18) and report it, not progress, what the
(19) community wants, and these people are
(20) speaking now. Thank you very much.

(21) **COLONEL CONNER:**

(22) Thank you. Are there any
(23) other state legislators in attendance that
(24) would like to say something? Any other
(25) elected officials, representatives?

MR. DICHARRY:

(1) I have one more,
(2) Councilwoman Ellen Hazeur-Distance.
(3) **COUNCILWOMAN HAZEUR-DISTANCE:**

(4) Good evening, Colonel, I
(5) know this is going to be a very tough feat
(6) for you, but in case you didn't know, here
(7) in New Orleans, we have a little saying
(8) about lagniappe and it usually means that
(9) when you get something, you get a little
(10) something extra. But when I look at this
(11) plan that you give me, I don't see
(12) anything extra on here. I just see basic
(13) quality-of-life issues that people should
(14) have anyway. And if Congress really wants
(15) to do something to help this community,
(16) make the bridges high-rise from the
(17) beginning. Put more money in here for
(18) housing rehab, for better playgrounds and
(19) parks. Don't try to hold a community
(20) hostage for 10 to 20 years for things that
(21) they should be getting anyway.

(22) I don't know if any of
(23) you have much contact or daily experience
(24) in the Lower Ninth Ward or any of the
(25)

(1) other neighborhoods, but if you ride
(2) through here, you will see new homes being
(3) built, you will see homes being renovated.
(4) You will see streets being resurfaced and
(5) others are going to be completely redone.
(6) You will see lights on playgrounds where
(7) there have not been lights before. Now,
(8) when we make all these improvements, how
(9) are people who have struggled here for
(10) years, their property values are going to
(11) suffer because of this project. How are
(12) we supposed to bring new home owners into
(13) this community when you want a 10- to 20-
(14) year construction project? And the
(15) saddest thing is, when it's all over,
(16) those millionaire ship owners and those
(17) big industry people are going to have a
(18) wider lot and we're going to be starting
(19) from ground zero all over again.

(20) I see that you briefly
(21) listed some of the mitigation plan
(22) features, but some of the things I don't
(23) see on here and maybe you didn't have
(24) room, but it was in the big book that you
(25) gave me. And first of all, Senator

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[1] Johnson said 33 million dollars is just, I
[2] guess that's lunch money for the people
[3] who are going to build this thing. But
[4] 1.5 million approximately was for a
[5] parking lot for your construction workers.
[6] I don't consider that to be mitigation for
[7] the community, and that wasn't laid out on
[8] here. But that's things people need to
[9] know. How is that going to help us?
[10] We're the ones and the people who live
[11] here every day are the ones who are going
[12] to have to be stuck in the traffic jams,
[13] not even you guys, this community.
[14] And when we talk about
[15] mitigation, I guess we're just supposed to
[16] believe that even though this Congress
[17] seriously considered cutting Medicaid and
[18] affecting millions of senior citizens,
[19] they're supposed to care so much about
[20] four little old neighborhoods in the Ninth
[21] Ward that they're going to give us 33
[22] million dollars? I don't think so. We
[23] don't want it, and that's just the bottom
[24] line.

[25] COLONEL CONNER:

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[1] Thank you, ma'am. Do we
[2] have any other elected officials or their
[3] designated representatives in the room at
[4] this time who would like to speak? Last
[5] call before we open it to the public.
[6] Okay, Joe, who is the
[7] first public speaker?
[8] MR. BROWN:
[9] I'm Lloyd Brown,
[10] President of the Lower Ninth Ward
[11] Neighborhood Council and also part of the
[12] working group with the widening of the
[13] Industrial Canal locks. As was mentioned
[14] before, and I ditto what representative
[15] Sherman Copeland and also Senator Johnson
[16] mentioned, I want to ditto that. And you
[17] know from the beginning, Georgietta
[18] Warren, who is deceased now, Rudy Muse,
[19] who is one of the proponents of this
[20] particular project, we opposed it, and I
[21] want to go on the record, as the
[22] representative from the Lower Ninth Ward
[23] Neighborhood Council, that we totally
[24] oppose it.
[25] As I may quote from one

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[1] of our working group members, we want you
[2] to look at the comprehensive study that
[3] was made in St. Bernard years ago that it
[4] was given and it was the preference of
[5] Congress to build or widen the locks in
[6] the Violet Canal area. And I notice that
[7] no mention of that has been made, for the
[8] exception of the representative who
[9] represented St. Bernard Parish was here
[10] and they wanted to make sure that it
[11] doesn't go there, and you gave us a
[12] defense mechanism as if to say that, hey,
[13] we're not going to build that lock down
[14] there because of the Environmental
[15] Protection Agency. We want the
[16] Environmental Protection Agency in our
[17] area as well. Representative of the Holy
[18] Cross area, Rudy Muse, who is now
[19] deceased, also opposed it. We mitigated
[20] this thing night after night. We talked
[21] about this project. We talked about the
[22] widening of the Industrial Canal. We
[23] talked about how hard many of the Vietnam
[24] Veterans work and those who were in the
[25] Korean War worked to help build this area

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[1] to make it a viable, livable place for
[2] this community. And during Betsy, we
[3] suffered. You ask these people here who
[4] suffered about what is happening with the
[5] widening of the canal. They blew that
[6] levee and poured all that water on us.
[7] We've never been compensated for it.
[8] We still would like to go
[9] on record opposing this project. We said
[10] it and you look in the minutes that were
[11] taken during our meetings. We met at
[12] Jackson Barracks repeatedly. We met here
[13] at Holy Cross. You read the minutes and
[14] you'll notice in each one of the minutes
[15] as we talked. And each of you guys who
[16] are up here, including the project
[17] managers and Mr. Pat Gallwey from the Port
[18] of New Orleans, the Colonel, I think this
[19] is my, what, fourth colonel whom I've
[20] worked with in regards to about the
[21] widening of the canal. We still going on
[22] record that we oppose it.
[23] The comprehensive study
[24] that was made for the Lower Ninth Ward/
[25] Holy Cross/Bywater area, this thick; the

(1) one for St. Bernard Parish, thin as my
(2) finger. So what I'm saying is that we
(3) don't want it. St. Bernard don't want it.
(4) We want to be compensated for when Betsy
(5) was. We flooded out in this area. We
(6) suffered. We walked this walk. We know
(7) what it is. We know what the problem is.
(8) And you talking about fleecing America.
(9) You are fleecing Louisiana, the Lower
(10) Ninth Ward. The Neighborhood Council will
(11) go on record as saying that we totally
(12) oppose this project. Thank you.

(13) COLONEL CONNER:

(14) Thank you, sir.

(15) MR. DICHARRY:

(16) Linda Potts?

(17) Linda Potts?

(18) (No response.)

(19) Elizabeth Blaise.

(20) MS. BLAISE:

(21) My name is Elizabeth
(22) Blaise and I do live at 5033 North Rampart
(23) Street in the Holy Cross Historic District
(24) and I've been a resident -
(25) You can't hear? It's too

(1) that was the only way you could get by
(2) foot out of the area. And we have no,
(3) absolutely, we have absolutely no
(4) emergency measures at all whenever there's
(5) any kind of flooding. Fortunately, we
(6) haven't flooded lately and for a good
(7) while. But there's absolutely no place,
(8) whenever they announce emergency buildings
(9) for people to get to, there's never any in
(10) our area. And the only way we survived
(11) Betsy was to just - I tell you, it was a
(12) mess. It took weeks and weeks, and I
(13) won't go through all of that because the
(14) people who went through it really know
(15) what it was.

(16) We've tried to do as much
(17) as we can in our area because we are
(18) isolated from the city. We're this little
(19) pocket. And it's been neglected for a
(20) long time. Nobody's paid much attention
(21) to it. Some people don't even know we
(22) exist. And we've had Christmas in
(23) October. We put up a, what was it,
(24) \$80,000 playground that we built. We're
(25) renovating homes with the Holy Cross

(1) low? How about there? Is it
(2) better? Should I go closer? Is this
(3) better? Okay. Good.
(4) I've lived here just
(5) about all my life. I was born here, spent
(6) a few years in Chicago when my family
(7) moved there and then came back, and I'm
(8) still living on property that my
(9) grandparents farmed on in the early 1900s.
(10) I've been a member of the Holy Cross
(11) Neighborhood Association since its
(12) inception in 1981, and I am against the
(13) widening of the canal. And most of these
(14) very eloquent speakers stole three-fourths
(15) of my speech, but this is such a
(16) monumental undertaking and the people who
(17) are going to feel it the most are those
(18) who live near the bridges, live near the
(19) levee where a lot of the work is going on,
(20) and I have no idea how they're going to
(21) blow up the St. Claude bridge to remove
(22) all that concrete. Please, don't even
(23) think about a high-rise bridge at St.
(24) Claude. Many people don't have
(25) transportation, and when Betsy hit us,

(1) Community Development Corporation, recent
(2) street paving this administration has
(3) helped us with.

(4) And, you know, all these
(5) statistics are just print on paper. You
(6) pretty well really have to consider that
(7) these are people living here. And when
(8) you talk about replacing the St. Claude
(9) bridge and you think about the people who
(10) are living only a street apart from that
(11) bridge, I have no idea how they would
(12) stand this. At least I'm a block or so
(13) away. But I still will feel it. And I
(14) can tell you and I can tell you the things
(15) that have made me make this decision, too,
(16) that we do not want. We don't want huge
(17) ships going through our neighborhood with
(18) possibly dangerous cargoes and rattling
(19) houses as they go by. We know there will
(20) be long delays in traffic when these ships
(21) pass through. We don't want our beautiful
(22) scenic levee to be cut back and topped
(23) with concrete walls. That would be where
(24) the graffiti artists can ply their trade,
(25) and if you look around where these walls

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[1] already exist, it is disgusting. We don't
[2] want to have to leave our homes because of
[3] the noise and the vibration heavy
[4] equipment produces. We don't want to lose
[5] Holy Cross School, a mainstay and support
[6] of our neighborhood because the students
[7] can't get to school with, at this time, it
[8] was only one bridge was going to be open
[9] at a time.

[10] And no amount -
[11] \$500,000? No amount of mitigation can
[12] justify that. And I do remind the Corps
[13] of Engineers on their statement on several
[14] occasions that if the residents did not
[15] want this project, it would not take
[16] place. Is this just rhetoric now and our
[17] area just considered expendable to the
[18] needs of the maritime industry? I hate to
[19] see this project put in any locality where
[20] it would have a devastating effect on the
[21] community. And I just think there must be
[22] some other way to solve this problem for
[23] the big ships other than sacrificing our
[24] neighborhood and its residents. Thank
[25] you.

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[1] COLONEL CONNER:
[2] Thank you, ma'am.
[3] MR. DICHARRY:
[4] Ken Wells.
[5] MR. WELLS:
[6] Good evening. Thank you
[7] for letting me comment tonight. My name
[8] is Ken Wells. I represent the American
[9] Waterways Operators. We are the trade
[10] association, national trade association
[11] for the barge and towing industry. I will
[12] be brief as much as anything else because
[13] I don't want to inflict this voice on
[14] anybody tonight. I also think I'm going
[15] to lose it pretty soon.
[16] Obviously this is an
[17] important project for our industry. I
[18] won't bore you tonight by going into the
[19] detail of what it means to our industry.
[20] I'll reserve that for my written comments.
[21] If I could though, tonight I want to talk
[22] about the real beneficiaries of this
[23] project, companies that don't own barges,
[24] people that don't work on towboats. This
[25] isn't just a lock that lets towboats and

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[1] barges move back and forth out of the
[2] Mississippi River. This is an economic
[3] development tool that benefits the entire
[4] southeastern United States. When people
[5] in Florida and Alabama flick on a light
[6] switch, it's very likely that the coal
[7] that produced that power moves through
[8] this lock. When people in Mississippi gas
[9] up their cars, it's very likely that the
[10] raw product that made that gasoline moved
[11] through this lock, moved up to Baton
[12] Rouge, moved across to Mobile. It's all
[13] part of an economic chain
[14] The reason this is such a
[15] busy lock, one of the busiest in the
[16] nation, is because it serves the economic
[17] needs of six states. This makes this
[18] transportation link an important part of
[19] our entire regional development here in
[20] the South. And the Corps has done a very
[21] good job, a great job, of measuring the
[22] impact that this lock will have on
[23] existing businesses and existing
[24] industries as well as the impact that the
[25] new lock could have.

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[1] But one thing is missing
[2] from the analysis. And rather than go
[3] into the statistics of the existing
[4] business, the Corps has done that, I'd
[5] like to talk about what the statistics do
[6] not capture. That is the role that a new
[7] lock could play in the future development
[8] of our area, not only Louisiana but the
[9] entire South. If you're thinking about
[10] the costs and benefits of locating an
[11] industry are, then you have to weigh the
[12] transportation costs. You have to weigh
[13] the reliability. Right now, this is not a
[14] reliable lock on which you'd base an
[15] entire facility on the Gulf Coast. It's
[16] old. It's cranky. It breaks down a lot.
[17] In our industry, we live with that every
[18] day, but if you're thinking about moving a
[19] new industry in, you're going to think
[20] twice about pinning your hopes on this
[21] lock. However, if this lock is replaced
[22] and if suddenly we have available
[23] inexpensive transportation in a reliable
[24] manner, if we have a reliable way to move
[25] products into the Mississippi River up

[1] into the Louisiana Industrial Canal, if
[2] you will, that's going to be one of the
[3] biggest selling points that this region
[4] can have nationally and internationally.
[5] If you build this lock, you are setting a
[6] course of economic development for the
[7] next century. If we don't build it, we
[8] will never have a way to measure how much
[9] economic opportunity was lost, how many
[10] jobs never came to the Gulf Coast, to the
[11] South of this country.

[12] And finally, I'd like to
[13] speak a little bit to some of the members
[14] of the community who have come out for
[15] this meeting, whose parents came out for
[16] meetings, whose parents' parents came out
[17] for meetings. In terms of our industry,
[18] you've earned our respect. I think you've
[19] earned everyone's respect. On and on and
[20] on the projects have come, and each time
[21] you've said back, it has to work for this
[22] community. The earlier plans didn't work
[23] for this community, but I think if you
[24] will look coolly at these plans, they do
[25] work for the community.

[1] You've said you needed
[2] jobs and job training being more important
[3] than anything. This program has job
[4] training. You've said the roads here need
[5] to be fixed up. We all drove over them to
[6] get here. There's money here to fix the
[7] roads. The houses here do need repair,
[8] renovation. A lot of people in this
[9] community don't have air conditioning. A
[10] lot of them don't have weather-proofed
[11] houses. There is money here for those
[12] things. In other words, you won. It may
[13] not seem like it, but you won, especially
[14] if you consider that there is not a pot of
[15] cash out there at the federal level. The
[16] senators, representatives, have all been
[17] very clear. They understand that. We
[18] understand that. I mean, we can all agree
[19] on that. The federal government is
[20] cutting back. The state is cutting back.
[21] If you want to talk about shield the
[22] money, the money is here. There may not
[23] be another program to come for some time.
[24] It's a victory for the neighborhood, I
[25] think. It's a victory for us. It's a

[1] victory for the South and the economic
[2] development in this area. And thank you
[3] for letting me speak tonight.

[4] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[5] Thank you, sir.

[6] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[7] Mary Penny Thompson.

[8] **MS. THOMPSON:**

[9] My name is Mary Penny
[10] Thompson. I am a student attorney at the
[11] Tulane Environmental Law Clinic. I am
[12] not, however, appearing today on behalf of
[13] Tulane Law School or the university but
[14] I'm instead appearing solely on the behalf
[15] of the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association
[16] and the Louisiana Environmental Action
[17] Network.

[18] My clients oppose this
[19] project because it fails to comply with
[20] the law, namely, the National
[21] Environmental Policy Act and its
[22] implementing regulations. The Corps of
[23] Engineers and the local sponsor, the Port
[24] of New Orleans, are pushing this project
[25] through the neighborhood surrounding the

[1] Industrial Canal without adequately
[2] addressing impacts or alternatives.
[3] First, the project does
[4] not adequately analyze the different
[5] alternatives for expanding the Industrial
[6] Canal. It has tentatively selected a
[7] channel 1200 feet long by 36 feet deep
[8] over a shorter, shallower draft channel
[9] which the Corps picked as an overall cost-
[10] effective one with benefits outweighing
[11] the costs. The deeper channel was
[12] selected, as noted in your report, due to
[13] the sponsorship of the Port of New
[14] Orleans. The Port will pay the
[15] construction costs of increasing the depth
[16] and length. But why go forward with an
[17] alternative that will cause more adverse
[18] impacts than produce benefits just because
[19] the Port dumps additional money into it?
[20] If the true goal is to solve a so-called
[21] bottleneck in navigation and the Corps'
[22] chosen alternative will do that, why are
[23] we being bought off by the Port?
[24] Second, the project
[25] cannot move forward without the

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[1] replacement of the Florida Avenue bridge,
 [2] yet the project fails to include any
 [3] detailed analysis of the replacement
 [4] process in its report or draft
 [5] Environmental Impact Statement. It then
 [6] goes on to use the replaced bridge as part
 [7] of its transportation plan for relieving
 [8] congestion in the affected areas. If the
 [9] City's and State's plan for relieving
 [10] congestion in this construction area is so
 [11] important and so crucially interrelated to
 [12] the Corps' planned project, why is there
 [13] no detailed analysis of how it will be
 [14] funded, how it will proceed or how that
 [15] construction will impact this area?
 [16] Third, the project's
 [17] adverse impacts are severe, yet the
 [18] analysis of those impacts is incomplete.
 [19] For example, construction will impact two
 [20] neighborhoods on the National Register of
 [21] Historic Places, the Holy Cross
 [22] neighborhood and Bywater neighborhood, for
 [23] approximately ten years. Also, the St.
 [24] Claude Avenue bridge as well as the
 [25] current lock are both eligible for

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[1] historic listings and they will be
 [2] destroyed. A memorandum of agreement
 [3] required by the National Historic
 [4] Preservation Act has not yet been
 [5] executed. Nowhere are the impacts of
 [6] piling or other construction
 [7] activities analyzed and their effect on
 [8] these fragile districts.
 [9] Another example of the
 [10] Corps' analysis, air quality, consists
 [11] only of old air quality samples and the
 [12] EPA regs. There is no analysis or
 [13] projected increase of pollutants during
 [14] the construction phase arising from the
 [15] emissions of construction vehicles in the
 [16] area, like traffic due to traffic
 [17] congestion, or simply the amount of dust
 [18] generated. There is no analysis or
 [19] projected of projected increase of
 [20] pollutants which will arise from the
 [21] anticipated increase in water traffic or
 [22] the Industrial Canal after construction.
 [23] This is just a sampling.
 [24] The Corps' report is riddled with holes
 [25] when it comes to analysis of adverse

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[1] impacts. As required under the National
 [2] Environmental Policy Act, it should be
 [3] clear that the full impacts have never
 [4] been analyzed or comprehensively addressed.
 [5] Since the impacts are so severe, the Corps
 [6] of Engineers recognizes in its own report
 [7] that full mitigation of impacts is
 [8] impossible. What can compensate for a
 [9] five-foot flood wall erected upon the open
 [10] green area of the current levee, cutting
 [11] off visual access to the water for all
 [12] residents of the nearby areas? What can
 [13] compensate for emergency response time
 [14] delays, including fire, rescue, ambulance
 [15] and police, due to at least one of three
 [16] bridges connecting the neighborhoods to
 [17] these services being out of commission
 [18] during construction time?
 [19] The Corps admits that
 [20] urban mitigation is a unique case, far
 [21] different from the Corps' accustomed
 [22] natural resources mitigation, yet the
 [23] Corps ignores its own contractor's
 [24] conclusions regarding preconstruction
 [25] phase mitigation and proceeds with its own

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[1] mitigation plan. This plan consists of
 [2] only 34 pages of vague, flexible promises
 [3] and a budget of only two pages for a plan
 [4] of spending 33 million dollars. Is this
 [5] adequate planning by anyone's standards?
 [6] Until the details of this plan are fixed,
 [7] analyzed and in black and white, how can
 [8] they be considered adequate?
 [9] Finally, the project will
 [10] occur in an area consisting of an
 [11] overwhelmingly minority population. Why
 [12] must the neighborhoods of the Lower Ninth
 [13] Ward, Bywater, St. Claude and Holy Cross
 [14] bear the severe impacts of this project
 [15] which will certainly result in further
 [16] decline of the residential areas, further
 [17] blight, slower emergency response time,
 [18] loss of access to the city and a flood
 [19] wall barricading them in like a prison
 [20] wall? Is this another replay of the
 [21] improvements of Claiborne Avenue, which
 [22] was built to facilitate vehicular traffic?
 [23] Have these residents been targeted because
 [24] they have less political clout than other
 [25] previously considered sites? The draft

[1] Evaluation Report and draft Environmental
[2] Impact Statement does little to answer the
[3] questions asked here. There can be no
[4] meaningful public comment until the report
[5] is supplemented with a detailed analysis
[6] required by the National Environmental
[7] Policy Act.

[8] These neighborhoods
[9] deserve more than what you've given them.
[10] There needs to be details and we urge you
[11] to reconsider and reevaluate this project
[12] and these terms. Thank you.

[13] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[14] Thank you.

[15] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[16] Brother Stephen Walsh.

[17] **BROTHER WALSH:**

[18] My name is Brother
[19] Stephen Walsh of the congregation of Holy
[20] Cross. While I am a resident of the Holy
[21] Cross Historic District neighborhood, I
[22] address you this evening as headmaster of
[23] Holy Cross Middle School and High School.
[24] The first members of the congregation of
[25] Holy Cross came to New Orleans from the

[1] Cross. Nearly half of our students ride a
[2] Holy Cross-owned bus to school, some
[3] happily beginning their day at 6:15 a.m.
[4] in order to attend the same school as
[5] their great grandfather, grandfather,
[6] father, brothers, uncles and cousins have
[7] attended or now attend. Rerouting of
[8] buses or delays due to revised traffic
[9] patterns would result in inconvenient,
[10] unacceptable and unsafe ride times for our
[11] students. Similarly, traffic problems
[12] would negatively affect student
[13] participation in our athletic and music
[14] programs and impede parent accessibility
[15] and participation in school events. In a
[16] word, your plans threaten our family
[17] legacy.

[18] The accompanying
[19] mitigation proposes a modest dollar amount
[20] to compensate for the possible loss of
[21] enrollment. For us, the loss of one
[22] student is intolerable. You present an
[23] extensive list of temporary jobs this
[24] project will create. And might I suggest
[25] that these may be at the expense of lost

[1] University of Notre Dame 148 years ago to
[2] assume responsibility for St. Mary's
[3] Orphan Asylum located in the present-day
[4] Bywater neighborhood. The present site of
[5] Holy Cross has been in continuous
[6] educational use since its purchase in
[7] 1859. However, the land is not our
[8] legacy. Our true legacy are the lives of
[9] generations of Holy Cross men and their
[10] families.

[11] I should like to remark
[12] on two aspects of your plans to renovate
[13] the locks which will adversely affect Holy
[14] Cross Middle School and High School.
[15] Despite the emergence at the 12th hour
[16] this evening of a proposed bridge over St.
[17] Claude, I would like to enter into the
[18] record my concern and our concern of the
[19] proposed two-year closure of the St.
[20] Claude Street bridge which is projected
[21] for the eighth year of the construction
[22] project. Presently, 65.7 percent of the
[23] students enrolled reside west of the
[24] Industrial Canal, passing most of our
[25] competitor schools on the way to Holy

[1] permanent jobs, such as teachers and
[2] janitors at Holy Cross.
[3] In the course of the past
[4] several years, as virtually every element
[5] of this plan has been altered, the one
[6] thing that has remained constant is the
[7] closure of the St. Claude bridge for two
[8] years. Your video this evening proudly
[9] boasts that during the construction, there
[10] will be no interruption in navigational
[11] traffic. We want nothing less, an
[12] uninterrupted flow of students across the
[13] St. Claude bridge. For generations of
[14] Holy Cross men, a time-worn if
[15] unacceptable excuse for tardiness has
[16] been, "Brother, the bridge was up." The
[17] irony now is that the bridge is down will
[18] very likely be the reason for the absence
[19] of some.

[20] It has not escaped our
[21] attention that the original construction
[22] of the Industrial Canal dispossessed
[23] Ursuline Academy and Convent, causing it
[24] to be relocated elsewhere in the city in
[25] 1912 to make way for the canal. After

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[1] years of discussion and despite this
 [2] evening's temporary proposed bridge, what
 [3] evidence is there that you have seriously
 [4] considered alternatives to the two-year
 [5] closure of St. Claude? Is it not time to
 [6] disregard conventional wisdom and are you
 [7] really aware of the adverse consequences
 [8] of your actions? It is one thing to learn
 [9] to live beyond the bridge and now, with
 [10] these new plans, we find that we are
 [11] destined to live behind a wall, albeit a
 [12] sea wall, proposed to replace the
 [13] graceful, sloping levee on the southern
 [14] end of our campus and beyond. Are you
 [15] aware that this stretch is virtually the
 [16] only part of the city's levee from which
 [17] one can approach the river without
 [18] crossing a railroad track? Have you taken
 [19] into consideration that ours is a national
 [20] historic neighborhood and this imposing
 [21] wall erodes our historical integrity and
 [22] robs of us an asset that makes the
 [23] neighborhood attractive to home owners?
 [24] As Robert Frost has
 [25] suggested, "Fences do not good neighbors

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[1] make." Trees and lawns on top do not
 [2] soften the offensive nature of what is
 [3] perceived to be a barrier by those of us
 [4] destined to live at the bottom of your sea
 [5] wall. Will you please justify the
 [6] necessity of extending this sea wall or
 [7] flood wall downriver from the canal?
 [8] I should like to conclude
 [9] with the words of Daniel Webster when he
 [10] argued the landmark Danforth College case
 [11] before the United States Supreme Court.
 [12] Applying these words to our school and our
 [13] neighborhood, "It is, sirs, a small school
 [14] but there are those of us who love it."
 [15] Thank you.
 [16] COLONEL CONNER:
 [17] Thank you, sir.
 [18] MR. DICHARRY:
 [19] Neil Armingeon.
 [20] MR. ARMINGEON:
 [21] Good evening. My name is
 [22] Neil Armingeon. I'm the Environmental
 [23] Director for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin
 [24] Foundation and I am here tonight on behalf
 [25] of our members. The Lake Foundation's

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[1] mission is the protection and restoration
 [2] of the Pontchartrain Basin, and in that
 [3] capacity, we have reviewed the draft
 [4] Environmental Impact Statement in regards
 [5] to its impacts on the water quality and
 [6] habitat of Lake Pontchartrain. We do
 [7] also, however, recognize that there are
 [8] many other potential impacts to the
 [9] neighborhoods surrounding this proposed
 [10] project, neighborhoods that the Foundation
 [11] has worked closely with since our creation
 [12] over eight years ago. We appreciate,
 [13] understand and support each of the
 [14] neighborhood's concerns and we do believe
 [15] that we can best serve the needs of the
 [16] community by focusing our attention on the
 [17] environmental impacts of the proposed
 [18] project. In our role as a public entity,
 [19] we will gladly share any information we
 [20] obtain on the potential environmental
 [21] impacts with the various community groups
 [22] as we continue to review this project.
 [23] From our preliminary
 [24] review of the EIS, it is apparent there is
 [25] a significant problem with contaminated

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[1] sediments in and around the area of the
 [2] Inner Harbor Navigation Canal. In
 [3] addition, we believe that the dredging and
 [4] disposal of these materials as described
 [5] in the Corps' plan has the potential to
 [6] spread these toxic materials to other
 [7] areas within the Pontchartrain Basin. It
 [8] is our opinion that the New Orleans
 [9] District has failed to adequately address
 [10] the subsequent potential human and
 [11] environmental health concerns related to
 [12] the removal and disposal of these
 [13] contaminated sediments and we believe this
 [14] work must be addressed before any review
 [15] process can move forward.
 [16] I have a few initial
 [17] remarks I'd like to enter into the record.
 [18] Some of the sediment core samples taken by
 [19] the Corps from within the canal show very
 [20] high levels of heavy metals, specifically
 [21] mercury contained in the sediments. Some
 [22] of these sediments had levels of mercury
 [23] of 20 parts per million or 40 times the
 [24] level considered safe by the State of
 [25] Louisiana. Many other samples contained

(1) high levels of heavy metals. Yet in the
(2) public notice advertising this meeting,
(3) the New Orleans District described the
(4) levels and contamination as moderate. We
(5) believe this is misleading and its
(6) designation is based on faulty science.

(7) This proposed project
(8) will require the removal and disposal of
(9) almost 1.4 million cubic yards of
(10) contaminated sediments. Clearly, there is
(11) a public health issue involved with the
(12) removal and the safe disposal of these
(13) materials that must be addressed in
(14) greater details.

(15) We also believe that the
(16) EIS uses questionable science to describe
(17) the sediment quality, averaging sediment
(18) samples rather than identifying them in a
(19) single basis. We believe that, again,
(20) this misleads the public as to extent of
(21) the contamination. The District, rather
(22) than utilizing a method that adequately
(23) describes the potential health risks and
(24) environmental impacts, uses a methodology
(25) which potentially misleads the public.

(1) We also believe that the
(2) Corps has failed to identify the extent
(3) and location of the contaminated
(4) sediments. The EIS does not contain a map
(5) that the public can clearly identify with,
(6) understanding where the sediments were
(7) taken.

(8) Finally, we question the
(9) effectiveness of the proposed disposal of
(10) said contaminated sediments in a confined
(11) disposal facility, basically which are
(12) areas along the Mississippi River Gulf
(13) Outlet, this in spite of the fact that
(14) these facilities, CDFs, have historically
(15) had problems, are poorly monitored, have
(16) limited ability to keep the toxins out of
(17) the environment, allow fish and wildlife
(18) and humans to come in contact with
(19) contaminated materials, and can leak
(20) contaminated water into surface and ground
(21) waters. The Corps proposes to use this
(22) technology in spite of the fact that a
(23) similar facility for disposal of
(24) contaminated sediments in the Calcasieu
(25) River has been shown to be failing and

(1) leaking toxins.
(2) We question the Corps and
(3) ask, how will these facilities be
(4) maintained? Will they contain settling
(5) ponds? Will they contain water quality
(6) treatment? How will they be maintained?
(7) Who will maintain them? How often will
(8) they be monitored? Who will monitor them?
(9) Will the information be shared with the
(10) affected communities?

(11) Finally, we question the
(12) Corps' disposal site choice. Why would
(13) you place hazardous material next to the
(14) Mississippi River Gulf Outlet in Orleans
(15) and St. Bernard Parish, one of the most
(16) dynamic areas in the Pontchartrain Basin?
(17) What would happen if a hurricane hit St.
(18) Bernard or lower Orleans Parish? Would
(19) the polluted sediments be spread all over
(20) the Lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard
(21) marshes? That is not even addressed. The
(22) contaminated materials must be contained
(23) in a way that would protect not only human
(24) health but environmental quality. We will
(25) submit further comments at the end of the

(1) period. Thank you.

(2) COLONEL CONNER:

(3) Thank you, sir.

(4) MR. DICHARRY:

(5) Carl Gonzales.

(6) MR. GONZALES:

(7) Good evening, Colonel.

(8) Thank you for allowing us to speak
(9) tonight. Can you hear me now? Thank you.

(10) I'm here in a dual
(11) capacity. First off, I am President of
(12) the Greater New Orleans Barge Fleeting
(13) Association. Our association is comprised
(14) of 56 member companies. Many of these
(15) members are towboat operators that push
(16) the barges through the locks. Also, many
(17) of our members are fleet operators, the
(18) barges that, as you see in the diagram or
(19) picture here, are fleeted in locations
(20) from the mouth of the river north to Baton
(21) Rouge and many fleets are located in the
(22) Industrial Canal and the Harvey Canal
(23) areas. Combined, these 56 companies
(24) employ in excess of 6,000 individuals.
(25) Through all the data that has been

[1] compiled by both the Corps and our
[2] association, we would like to reserve the
[3] right concerning this matter and file
[4] appropriate memorandums to you by the
[5] February date.

[6] Secondly, I am executive
[7] vice-president of Gulf South Marine
[8] Transportation Company. We are a local
[9] towboat operator. Three-quarters of our
[10] towing is done on the Mississippi River
[11] and the East Canal. This area is from New
[12] Orleans, the Industrial locks, east of St.
[13] Marks, Florida. Our vessels service the
[14] many ports located in Louisiana,
[15] Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. We have
[16] for many years - we've been in business
[17] for 15 years - provided this service to
[18] many of the barge lines throughout the
[19] country.

[20] With this in mind, we
[21] also would like to reserve our right to
[22] file the appropriate data to you and the
[23] members here if they wish the tonnage and
[24] so forth and the economic development that
[25] our business provides to the greater New

[1] Orleans area in the whole. Thank you very
[2] much.

[3] COLONEL CONNER:

[4] Thank you.

[5] MR. DICHARRY:

[6] David Gegenheimer.

[7] I apologize if I mispronounce your name.

[8] MR. GEGENHEIMER:

[9] Quite all right. I'd
[10] like to salute the tenacity of the
[11] opposition of this project. I know you
[12] all have been fighting it for a long time.
[13] And I certainly wouldn't advocate the
[14] trusting of the Army Corps of Engineers.
[15] The Corps is an arm of the Army who knows
[16] nothing but dredge and fill. But as a
[17] resident of St. Bernard Parish who has
[18] seen what the Mississippi River Gulf
[19] Outlet has done, excuse me, my obnoxious
[20] orange T-shirt says, "Mr. Go Must Go."
[21] This project, and I'm afraid it came to
[22] fruition in the late '50s when public
[23] comment had no weight, but this project
[24] was shoved down our throats along with the
[25] promise of economic development which we

[1] have had none of. There is no development
[2] along the "Mr. Go" from its mouth all the
[3] way to the city, none whatsoever, over 60
[4] miles through St. Bernard Parish. We've
[5] lost almost all of our cypress swamp. Our
[6] marshes that were fresh to intermediate
[7] have been turned into salt marshes. We've
[8] lost thousands of acres, all for the
[9] benefit of the Port of New Orleans.

[10] But be that as it may,
[11] I'm not like Senator Dean. I do not want
[12] to see a cut through St. Bernard. St.
[13] Bernard does not need to be cut in half.
[14] And I have to support the Corps' project,
[15] although I would like to see a lot of your
[16] interests and concerns addressed a little
[17] bit better. Thank you.

[18] COLONEL CONNER:

[19] Thank you, sir.

[20] MR. DICHARRY:

[21] Chris Holmes.

[22] MR. HOLMES:

[23] My name is Chris Holmes.
[24] I'm a resident of St. Bernard Parish. Is
[25] this where St. Bernard applies for the

[1] mitigation money for the MRGO tonight?
[2] No? Okay. Just trying.

[3] We've got a big concern.
[4] I'm currently chairman of the St. Bernard
[5] Parish Coastal Zone Advisory Board. Our
[6] board did not get to meet in time to
[7] discuss this because we just found out
[8] about this, but I will say that I'm
[9] certain we'll have serious concerns on the
[10] disposal of this dredge material out of
[11] the channel. You're looking at 1,400,000
[12] cubic yards of what the Corps designates
[13] as moderately contaminated and they want
[14] to come put that on the banks of the
[15] channel in our parish. Well, please don't
[16] do us any more favors with that.

[17] The other thing, I'm a
[18] daily commuter. I travel St. Claude every
[19] day. And the purpose of this thing is to
[20] build a bigger lock that's going to
[21] facilitate increased maritime traffic and
[22] you're going to put another low-level
[23] bridge that's going to have to open for
[24] every vessel that goes through. It's
[25] ridiculous. Common sense. I mean, I

[1] don't know how it escapes the equation.
[2] You've got the second bridge at Claiborne
[3] you're going to put back at the same
[4] height. You're also making this project
[5] 36 feet deep. It's going to be able to
[6] accommodate ships.
[7] Everyone that spoke
[8] tonight, the presentation in here tonight,
[9] the gentleman that spoke on the maritime
[10] unit, everybody talked about barges and
[11] tows. I don't know of any barges and tows
[12] that are drawing 36 feet of water. This
[13] thing is increased and added to because
[14] the Port wants to use it to get container
[15] ships through there. A second bridge will
[16] have to open also to get a ship through.
[17] You might get a few tows under it. You'll
[18] never get a ship under it. The thing is,
[19] as usual, it's not thought out. You've
[20] got engineers and scientists that look at
[21] it but for some reason, there's no common
[22] sense. Please address some of that.

[23] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[24] Thank you, sir.

[25] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[1] C.A. Larsen, Sr.
[2] **MR. LARSEN:**
[3] Gentlemen at the head
[4] table, ladies and gentlemen, it gives me a
[5] real pleasure to come back down to this
[6] area after having spent 27 years here,
[7] very enjoyable years. I was fishing,
[8] swimming, playing ball alongside the
[9] Industrial Canal banks, crawfishing,
[10] hunting killdeer with 12-gauge shotguns,
[11] really enjoying myself. But it pains me
[12] to see plans going ahead with replacing
[13] the present locking system with much
[14] larger locks, 1200 feet. Is this the
[15] right direction? We need improvements in
[16] the locking area. There's no question
[17] about it. I appreciate the barge traffic,
[18] but please, only for barge traffic. The
[19] Gulf Outlet was built mainly for ships'
[20] use. Let's keep it that way, not have the
[21] large vessels using the Gulf Outlet and
[22] the Industrial Canal to get to Centreport.
[23] The above is nothing new, just another
[24] phase of Centreport, as outlined in "Port
[25] of New Orleans Forges Ahead" dated 1950,

[1] and in another publication of March 1970
[2] prepared by the Bectel Corporation for the
[3] Board of Commissioners, Port of New
[4] Orleans, an agency of the State of
[5] Louisiana. The above book is a rubber
[6] stamp of the Dock Board's publication of
[7] 1950. I have both publications here with
[8] me tonight if anybody wants to review
[9] them. It's exactly a rubber stamp. The
[10] Port paid Bectel Corporation for planning
[11] this.

[12] Now, if Coleman Warner,
[13] that's from the Times-Picayune, I see
[14] they've folded up and left, or his
[15] co-workers are here tonight, would like to
[16] read an editorial that I sent to the
[17] editor in December 1969, so you fellows
[18] aren't bringing out anything new. This is
[19] dated 1969, December. This is to the
[20] editor of the TP: "Dear sir: Off-center
[21] Centreport." If you all are not familiar
[22] with the term "Centreport," that's that
[23] location at the head of the Gulf Outlet.
[24] "Yes, I agree. There is an urgency for
[25] revolutionary improvements for our greater

[1] New Orleans area in order to catch up,
[2] stay abeam and proceed ahead of world
[3] progress in the maritime field, but is the
[4] proposed location of Centreport the proper
[5] move? Why would the Bectel Corporation"
[6] - survey company, that is - "recommend
[7] giving up sites on the broad, deep,
[8] wonderful Mississippi River for a location
[9] on the Gulf Outlet that will take years
[10] and I'm sure a billion dollars" - Now,
[11] I'm speaking of a billion dollars in 1969
[12] - "to bring up to the present standard of
[13] our great river? No amount of money will
[14] change a body of water to equal in any
[15] respects the father of all waters.
[16] Congestion. Congestion. This is what I
[17] really envision in the year 2000 or much
[18] sooner. At the carefully selected
[19] proposed site, in addition to heavy
[20] congestion, can we possibly build dykes,
[21] sorry, levees, substantial enough to hold
[22] back tidal waters that will use an
[23] improved waterway to flood the whole damn
[24] area?" And that's just what happened.
[25] "Please don't abandon the muddy Miss. The

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(1) potential is there along her solid banks.
 (2) Not only in Orleans Parish but adjoining
 (3) parishes, the possibilities are unlimited.
 (4) Let's reconsider, please."
 (5) Now, that was sent in
 (6) 1969. This is my ideas on that Centreport
 (7) or that Gulf Outlet. Now, it really
 (8) heartens me to see a meeting like this
 (9) with the elected officials really speaking
 (10) out. When this was going on in 1969,
 (11) 1970, I was one making this noise and I
 (12) was trying to contact everybody, Long, the
 (13) engineers, that was Harr & Hunt, there was
 (14) Senator Nunez from down here, the St.
 (15) Bernard voice. You name it, I got it here
 (16) referenced. And no one paid any
 (17) attention. This was a done deal. It was
 (18) going to get built regardless.
 (19) "To those familiar with
 (20) the term 'Centreport,' I would like to
 (21) briefly explain it. The New Orleans Dock
 (22) Board, upon advice of the Bectel
 (23) Corporation, proposed," this was over the
 (24) next 30 years, "the wonderful Port of New
 (25) Orleans presently located on the great

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(1) Mississippi River in Orleans Parish to a
 (2) location in the eastern part of town
 (3) alongside the congested Industrial Canal
 (4) in the low-lying ditch called the Gulf
 (5) Outlet. The SI agree there is an urgency
 (6) for revolutionary improvements for our
 (7) greater New Orleans area in order to catch
 (8) up, stay abeam and proceed ahead of real
 (9) progress in the maritime field. But is
 (10) the proposed location of Centreport the
 (11) proper move? Think about it. Why would
 (12) the Bectel Corp. recommend giving up sites
 (13) on the broad, deep Mississippi River for a
 (14) location on a waterway that will take
 (15) years and I'm sure billions of dollars to
 (16) bring up to the present standard of our
 (17) great river?"
 (18) You can see I'm really an
 (19) advocate of the Mississippi River. Why
 (20) would they want to go back in the ditch
 (21) like that where I swam as a boy and build
 (22) this Gulf Outlet and then, with this 50-
 (23) foot draft and 1200-foot lock, you know
 (24) that's going to be used for ships and
 (25) that's totally wrong. If they went ahead

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(1) and built that Gulf Outlet, which was a
 (2) big mistake, let them use it now. If they
 (3) want to come to New Orleans, let them use
 (4) our Southwest Pass. I can understand the
 (5) American Waterways' idea about the barge
 (6) traffic. I appreciate there's a lot of
 (7) barge traffic in there, going through
 (8) there, but is all this 1200-foot locking
 (9) and 50-foot depth necessary?
 (10) "Not only is the
 (11) Centreport location congested and
 (12) vulnerable to floods, there's a long-range
 (13) plan, by the time the location is totally
 (14) usable, which includes a wider and deeper
 (15) channel and locking system" - think now,
 (16) this was in '69-'70 I had written this -
 (17) "the Mississippi River and Gulf Outlet,
 (18) all the business will be located
 (19) elsewhere. Mr. Barkington" - I'm sure
 (20) you remember that name there, an executive
 (21) Port director and general manager of New
 (22) Orleans Dock Board - "is doing a fine
 (23) job" - I'm using present tense because
 (24) that was present tense - "of coordinating
 (25) and directing local groups for a single

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(1) purpose but it's in the wrong direction.
 (2) The proper direction is not back at
 (3) Centreport but alongside the grand banks
 (4) of the Mississippi River, not only in
 (5) Orleans but all the parishes. They're
 (6) doing a wonderful job up around Nashville
 (7) Avenue and above there. Let's develop
 (8) what we have now, not plans for 30 years
 (9) from now. The potential is here on the
 (10) great, deep, broad Mississippi River."
 (11) That's 1970. You got to
 (12) remember that.
 (13) Okay. Just a few
 (14) references I talked about. This is also
 (15) in 1972. I had written Nunez, Senator
 (16) Nunez, Mr. Roy from your St. Bernard paper
 (17) down here, Helen Bentley, she was chairman
 (18) of Federal Maritime, and radio talk shows.
 (19) I was on them whenever I could get on
 (20) them, a letter from the Canal Barge
 (21) Company, letters from the state senators,
 (22) Russell Long, Ellender, my correspondence
 (23) was going back and forth, Harr and other
 (24) people I just won't take your time with.
 (25)

COLONEL CONNER:

(1) Sir, if I could ask you
(2) to wrap up your comments.
(3) **MR. LARSEN:**
(4) Do what?
(5) **COLONEL CONNER:**
(6) If I could ask you to
(7) wrap up your comments, please.
(8) **MR. LARSEN:**
(9) All right. I'm not an
(10) elected official. I have to say fast.
(11) Sad to say, the powers
(12) went ahead with the Gulf Outlet and we are
(13) having negative mega troubles, flooding,
(14) erosion, ETC. Let's don't compound our
(15) mistakes. A word to the people opposed to
(16) the digging project. The packers, that's
(17) the Dock Board, the engineers and so on,
(18) they are not on our side. They are the
(19) opposition. Hearings should be held
(20) before plans are drawn, not after in this
(21) case. Looks like a done deal again, like
(22) the MRGO. You good people opposed better
(23) get some heavy backing such as you have
(24) tonight but not limited to. Get your
(25) press more involved. Get Billy Tauzin,

(1) Livingston, civil rights activists down
(2) here, environmentalists. If you don't do
(3) that, you better get your nose, your mouth
(4) filters, your goggles and your ear plugs
(5) ready. Thanks for the time to express
(6) myself. I'm sorry I took a little more
(7) time.
(8) **COLONEL CONNER:**
(9) Thank you, sir.
(10) **MR. LARSEN:**
(11) As an afterthought, I
(12) just want to let you know, I'm not a new
(13) man with the waterways. I spent 50 years
(14) in the maritime field, both afloat and
(15) ashore, and I can speak from the - I had
(16) run the rivers numbers of times and the
(17) canal. I have a pilot license for both of
(18) them. And I think I'm the first seaman
(19) that had spoken here tonight. I thank you
(20) all for giving me your time.
(21) **MR. DICHARRY:**
(22) Mr. and Mrs. Donald
(23) Dorsey. Mr. and Mrs. Donald Dorsey.
(24) (No response.)
(25) Charles "Pete" Savoie.

(1) **MR. SAVOIE:**
(2) My name is Charles
(3) Savoie. My friends call me "Pete." It's
(4) kind of a tough act to follow, but he had
(5) a lot on the ball.
(6) Forty-one years ago, some
(7) prominent politicians dired to develop
(8) their land in the France Road corridor.
(9) To do this, they decided to dig a straight
(10) cut for 43 miles through St. Bernard
(11) Parish. This cut is known as the "Mr.
(12) Go." This was the reason St. Bernard and
(13) New Orleans was flooded in 1965. I had
(14) the unfortunate experiencce of going around
(15) plucking people off the roof of their
(16) houses, so I know what damage it can
(17) cause. Where we once had an 8,000-acre
(18) buffer zone to protect us from hurricanes,
(19) we now have 67 billion gallons of water
(20) waiting to be pushed into St. Bernard and
(21) New Orleans.
(22) We were promised economic
(23) development and industry in St. Bernard.
(24) It did not happen. St. Bernard Parish has
(25) lost over 27,000 acres of land. When "Mr.

(1) Go" was dug, the spoil was dumped on the
(2) outside of the channel, destroying all of
(3) the estuaries. Now the Corps wants to
(4) dump contaminants on the north side and
(5) destroy another 270 acres of estuaries.
(6) All of this wetland laws is to accommodate
(7) two ships a day. Now, this is hard to
(8) believe, but that's how many ships a day
(9) use "Mr. Go," two. Of the 400 container
(10) ships, only 20 ships draw over 33 feet of
(11) water. This means we spend over seven
(12) million dollars per year to accommodate 22
(13) ships. We also know that if the ships'
(14) speed was slowed down from 14 miles per
(15) hour to 10 miles per hour, erosion would
(16) be cut by 50 percent. This would cost the
(17) shipping industry two million three
(18) hundred thousand dollars a year, so they
(19) will not slow down the ships.
(20) Now, they want to build a
(21) lock at the cost of 500 million dollars to
(22) accommodate vessels that draw 36 feet of
(23) water. Most of us know that the fourth-
(24) generation ships will draw in excess of 40
(25) feet of water. Are we willing to agree to

(1) build a lock that will be obsolete before
(2) it's completed? All of the waste and
(3) destruction of our wetlands and
(4) neighborhoods can be eliminated by
(5) relocating the container industry to the
(6) riverfront where it rightfully belongs.

(7) Let's not put our faith
(8) in the hands of the Corps. They have a
(9) poor track record. Their concern with
(10) jobs for the future. They're concerned.
(11) They are not concerned with the
(12) environment and the lives of the people
(13) who are paying their salaries, we, the
(14) taxpayers. Thank you.

(15) COLONEL CONNER:

(16) Thank you, sir.

(17) MR. DICHARRY:

(18) Bill Kinsler.

(19) MR. KINSLER:

(20) Colonel Conner, my name
(21) is Bill Kinsler. I'm the vice-president
(22) and general manager of Gulf operations for
(23) American Commercial Barge Line. American
(24) Commercial is the largest inland river
(25) carrier in the United States and, as such,

(1) facility preclude the need for the prompt,
(2) cost-effective replacement of this
(3) structure.

(4) In August 1996, the
(5) Inland Waterway Users Board sent to the
(6) Secretary of the Army and Congress
(7) simultaneously its prioritized
(8) recommendations for water resource
(9) development projects in the United States.

(10) In this report, the board listed the
(11) replacement of Industrial Lock second only
(12) to the replacement of Marmet Lock on the
(13) Kanawa River in West Virginia.

(14) American Commercial Barge
(15) Line Company is in agreement with these
(16) recommendations and strongly supports the
(17) Corps of Engineers for the development and
(18) the construction of a new navigation
(19) facility at the earliest possible time.
(20) Thank you.

(21) COLONEL CONNER:

(22) Thank you.

(23) MR. DICHARRY:

(24) Mark Cooper.

(25) MR. COOPER:

(1) we are keenly interested in any system
(2) improvement that positively, cost
(3) effectively and safely impacts and will
(4) enhance the waterways system. In order to
(5) ensure that fellow participants have an
(6) opportunity to present their opinions, my
(7) comments will be very brief. American
(8) Commercial Barge Line Company will forward
(9) to your office a more detailed written
(10) comment by the closing date.

(11) As each member of this
(12) assembly is aware, the Industrial Canal
(13) lock is outdated and represents a severe
(14) bottleneck to not only waterway interests
(15) but also to the consuming public of the
(16) United States. Many statistics are
(17) readily available, so I will not endeavor
(18) to repeat for this group the facts that
(19) will become part of the official document.
(20) I can say that delays at the Industrial
(21) Lock which have averaged 11 and a half
(22) hours per tow for the last ten years, the
(23) increasing development and importance of
(24) the Gulf Intracoastal Canal east and the
(25) escalating repair costs of the current

(1) My name is Mark Cooper,
(2) 3929 Chartres Street, member of the board
(3) of directors, Bywater Neighborhood
(4) Association. And I didn't agree with
(5) everything they said but I want to know
(6) where I can get one of those orange
(7) T-shirts.

(8) On a letter dated
(9) 10 December 1996, you stated that a public
(10) hearing would be conducted mid-January,
(11) mid-January, and public review process
(12) would conclude January 27th. I think
(13) that's today. Why did I not receive
(14) notice of this hearing until January 14th?
(15) When were the notices sent out? How many
(16) notices were mailed? How many notices
(17) were sent out with the wrong date,
(18) Wednesday, January 27th? How many
(19) corrected notices were sent out and when?
(20) I never got one. How many churches are
(21) there within a 20-block radius of the
(22) project and how many notices were sent to
(23) churches in time to publish in their
(24) parish newsletters? How many and to whom
(25) were notices sent to neighborhood civic