

[1] association presidents, secretaries, board
[2] members or newsletter editors within the
[3] project area?
[4] The Bywater Neighborhood
[5] Association has had a monthly newsletter
[6] for over 21 years. I talked to the editor
[7] today. He didn't receive a notice of this
[8] meeting. Why did you schedule a hearing
[9] for the last day of the public review
[10] period? The district engineer conducted a
[11] meeting for which notice listed the huddle
[12] at Holy Cross as the meeting room for a
[13] January 22nd meeting of the Neighborhood
[14] Working Group. Since the meeting was not
[15] held at the huddle, what individual is
[16] posted to direct people to the correct
[17] meeting room? Why was the notice of the
[18] meeting only published once in the
[19] Times-Picayune newspaper? Which other
[20] media were contacted and on what date?
[21] Where in the EIS is the transplanting of
[22] trees alongside the existing lock
[23] addressed? Why did the district engineer
[24] purport to have raised the issue of saving
[25] these trees and receive the response that

[1] they would probably end up firewood when
[2] in fact it was the Bywater Neighborhood
[3] Association that raised this very issue
[4] years ago? And that's documentable. Why
[5] are the trees alongside the canal dying?
[6] Has the Corps done an inventory and
[7] assessment of these trees and is there a
[8] program in place to fertilize, prune and
[9] protect these trees until they might be
[10] relocated if the project moves forward?
[11] Has the Corps consulted with the Disney
[12] Company about their successful transplant
[13] of mature live oaks in Orlando, a project
[14] brought to the Corps' attention why the
[15] Bywater Neighborhood Association? And, if
[16] so, why was this report not shared with
[17] the Neighborhood Working Group?
[18] How many jobs may be
[19] transferred out of our neighborhood if the
[20] Coast Guard station is relocated? What
[21] will be the net loss to our neighborhood
[22] economy, i.e., restaurants, lumber,
[23] hardware and other stores, if this station
[24] is moved? Has the Society for the
[25] Prevention of Cruelty to Animals at 1319

[1] Japonica in the shadow of the locks been
[2] notified of this proposed project? What
[3] effect will this project have on the SPCA?
[4] Has Mr. Ivy Gaudet, the head of the
[5] Carpenter's Millwright and Piledrivers
[6] Apprenticeship and Training Program at
[7] 1215 Japonica Street, also in the shadow
[8] of the locks, been notified of this
[9] project?
[10] What impacts will this
[11] have on their operations? Has the Bywater
[12] station of the United States Post Office,
[13] Postal Service, in the shadow of the
[14] existing St. Claude Avenue bridge ramps,
[15] been notified? What impact on their
[16] operations will this project bring to
[17] pass? Will our mail service be adversely
[18] affected? Has Mr. Erroll Williams, the
[19] assessor for the Third Municipal District
[20] which covers both sides of the canal, been
[21] notified of this project? Has Mr.
[22] Williams, whose job it is to assess
[23] property value for the purposes of the
[24] city and state ad valorem taxes, been
[25] asked his professional opinion about the

[1] effects of this project on area property
[2] values? Why has the District C councilman
[3] which covers the west side of the
[4] Industrial Canal and Bywater historically
[5] been excluded from the planning process.
[6] though it has included other elected
[7] officials?
[8] On Page 25 of the Draft
[9] Evaluation Report Mitigation Plan, it's
[10] stated that the New Orleans District does
[11] not expect net improvements to result. If
[12] this is so, why should we be partners for
[13] this project? Why did the project
[14] engineer seem surprised at this
[15] attribution when it was raised at the
[16] January 22nd Neighborhood Working Group
[17] meeting? The same point was raised on May
[18] 2nd, 1995, as documented in the minutes,
[19] Page 4, last paragraph, referring to the
[20] April draft of the mitigation plan. Does
[21] the Corps just record the minutes and then
[22] ignore the questions or points that are
[23] raised there in? And what good will rails
[24] be on the new St. Claude bridge that's
[25] proposed if there is no system of mass

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(1) transit incorporated into the mitigation
(2) plan? Does the Corps really think that if
(3) we build it, they will come?

(4) COLONEL CONNER:

(5) Thank you, sir.

(6) MR. DICHARRY:

(7) Dick Watson.

(8) MR. WATSON:

(9) Good evening. My name is
(10) Dick Watson and I'm speaking tonight in my
(11) capacity as the chairman of the board of
(12) directors of Holy Cross School, whose
(13) members have authorized me to speak in
(14) behalf of their concerns regarding the
(15) adverse effects of the lock project on the
(16) Holy Cross School.

(17) As a native of New
(18) Orleans, one whose family, grandparents
(19) and parents have lived in this
(20) neighborhood as residents and businessmen
(21) for over 75 years, both my father and I
(22) were born and raised within a dozen blocks
(23) of this school and the locks, I have
(24) witnessed and was an unwilling participant
(25) in the physical and economic devastation

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(1) inflicted by Hurricane Betsy, the negative
(2) economic repercussions of which are still
(3) being felt today. I know firsthand the
(4) real-life frustration caused by living in
(5) the isolated neighborhood bounded by the
(6) river and the canal, cut off from the city
(7) by the bridges and separated from the
(8) parish by both municipal boundaries and
(9) the Jackson Barracks.

(10) We may be an orphan but
(11) we have a history. For nearly 140 years,
(12) Holy Cross, the religious congregation and
(13) the school, have been an anchor of
(14) stability for the community, so much so
(15) that this National Historic District has
(16) taken Holy Cross as its name. I would
(17) like to share with you a resolution passed
(18) by our board on January 16th, 1997. I
(19) quote: "While we appreciate the economic
(20) significance of the locks improvement
(21) project to the city, the region, the
(22) nation and the maritime industry, we
(23) likewise believe that it will have an
(24) adverse economic impact on Holy Cross
(25) School and the neighborhood which we do

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(1) not believe has been adequately documented
(2) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in its
(3) various studies. Therefore, the board of
(4) directors of Holy Cross School
(5) respectfully respect that the U.S. Army
(6) Corps of Engineers initiate and fully fund
(7) an independent economic impact study to be
(8) conducted by a panel of local experts to
(9) quantify the adverse economic impact of
(10) this project on Holy Cross School and the
(11) Holy Cross District. It is our belief
(12) that objective data from such a study is
(13) essential to ensure the economic stability
(14) of Holy Cross School and the Holy Cross
(15) District neighborhood and to provide
(16) adequate mitigation funds for
(17) appropriation and allocation."

(18) The adverse economic
(19) impact of this project to Holy Cross
(20) School is far more reaching than simply
(21) the loss of tuition income during the
(22) construction phase due to inconvenience
(23) and safety concerns of parents. Holy
(24) Cross School is the only all-male middle
(25) and high school in the greater New Orleans

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(1) area. Consequently, the loss of a
(2) fifth-grader represents the loss of a
(3) student for eight years. In his remarks,
(4) Brother Stephen Walsh spoke of the family
(5) legacy of Holy Cross. Allow me to
(6) illustrate.

(7) My father was
(8) economically unable to attend Holy Cross
(9) but as his only child could send me and I
(10) began in seventh grade, which was the
(11) earliest grade at that time. As a result
(12) of the satisfaction expressed by my
(13) parents, my five cousins also graduated
(14) from Holy Cross School, all beginning in
(15) the fifth grade. My two sons have since
(16) graduated and they plan to send their sons
(17) as well. Finally, my parents and I have
(18) also recommended as a result of my success
(19) to Holy Cross at least five neighborhood
(20) sons who have either graduated or are
(21) currently enrolled, each entering Holy
(22) Cross in the fifth grade.

(23) The net result is, had I
(24) not attended Holy Cross because of the
(25) bridge or problems with the locks, the

[1] economic impact to this school would have
 [2] been the loss of 13 students spanning over
 [3] a 30-year period of time. Quantitatively,
 [4] if you do the math, the loss would have
 [5] been about 102 years of tuition payments
 [6] or an amount well in excess of \$350,000
 [7] simply from the loss of one student. This
 [8] is historical fact, not fiction. A five
 [9] percent decline in enrollment could impact
 [10] Holy Cross for the next 30 to 50 years
 [11] with economic consequences totaling in the
 [12] millions of dollars. Correspondingly,
 [13] reduced enrollment will result in
 [14] immediate loss of revenues for the
 [15] transportation services of the school, the
 [16] cafeteria, the bookstore, athletic gate
 [17] receipts, band and choral concerts, summer
 [18] camps and all other summer activities.
 [19] Accompanying of all of
 [20] this will likely be a very uncertainty
 [21] about the future of this school which
 [22] could also erode donor confidence and
 [23] result in decrease in philanthropic
 [24] giving. Reduced enrollment would also
 [25] have an associated economic loss to the

[1] lived down here for 12 years. I owned a
 [2] house on Royal Street. And I want to talk
 [3] to you, Colonel, about the 15 predecessors
 [4] that you had here that literally committed
 [5] rape on this neighborhood. Every time you
 [6] announce this in the newspaper, the
 [7] property values go clean to hell. I sold
 [8] my house for eight bucks a square foot,
 [9] \$8,000 for a home. I venture to say, if
 [10] you bought a home here in New Orleans
 [11] right now, you're going to spend \$45 to
 [12] \$50 a square foot. That is rape, albeit
 [13] economic, rape nonetheless. And
 [14] gentlemen, this has been ongoing for 40
 [15] years. The value of the homes here in
 [16] Holy Cross neighborhood is lower than \$20
 [17] a square foot, every house. It's
 [18] ridiculous. And it's caused by the
 [19] constant announcements by the Corps of
 [20] Engineers that they're going to come down
 [21] here and displace a bunch of people, widen
 [22] the canal, cut out transportation for two
 [23] years or more, and the people will not
 [24] come here. So you cannot sell a home. If
 [25] you bought one, you're stuck with it or

[1] community in terms of reduced jobs for
 [2] teachers, administrators, coaches, bus
 [3] drivers, cafeteria workers, maintenance
 [4] security and clerical staff. This project
 [5] will create temporary jobs during the
 [6] construction phase but may very well cost
 [7] the loss of permanent jobs.
 [8] None of these concerns in
 [9] our opinion of Holy Cross and other
 [10] businesses along St. Claude Avenue have
 [11] been adequately addressed or documented in
 [12] your reports today. For this reason, we
 [13] respectfully request the independent
 [14] economic impact study. Thank you.

[1] you sell it at a great loss.
 [2] Rape, albeit economic,
 [3] it's rape nonetheless and it's a damn
 [4] shame. Please cut it out. Thank you.
 [5] COLONEL CONNER:
 [6] Thank you, sir.
 [7] MR. DICHARRY:
 [8] Sal Doucette.
 [9] MR. DOUCETTE:
 [10] First, it's the consensus
 [11] of all three neighborhood groups that we
 [12] do not support or want this project.
 [13] Secondly, we do not know what to believe,
 [14] the video or the mitigation plan. The
 [15] video leads you to believe that there are
 [16] jobs and training for the locals. As for
 [17] the mitigation plan, it is not effectively
 [18] implemented with full consideration for
 [19] the people living on either side of the
 [20] canal. It offers a \$500,000 training
 [21] assistance for jobs. How will they do it?
 [22] Who will get this training? What is the
 [23] criteria they will use to pick these
 [24] people for this job? What about the
 [25] people who have the skills as needed to do

[15] COLONEL CONNER:

[16] Thank you, sir.

[17] MR. DICHARRY:

[18] Dean Shapiro. Dean

[19] Shapiro.

[20] (No response.)

[21] Raymond King.

[22] MR. KING:

[23] Good evening. My name is

[24] Raymond King. I'm past president of the

[25] Holy Cross Neighborhood Association. I

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[1] these jobs now? What about the control of
[2] these jobs? We question the sincerity of
[3] the Port and the Corps. Thank you very
[4] much.

[5] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[6] Thank you, sir.

[7] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[8] Geneva Grill.

[9] **MS. GRILL:**

[10] Good evening, gentlemen.

[11] My name is Geneva Grill. I'm the District
[12] Design Engineer for the Department of
[13] Transportation and Development. I'm here
[14] representing Frank M. Denton, Secretary of
[15] the Department of Transportation &
[16] Development.

[17] Mr. Denton feels like
[18] this is a very important project to both
[19] the City of New Orleans and the State of
[20] Louisiana. The Department fully supports
[21] the Corps of Engineers and the Port of New
[22] Orleans in constructing this project. We
[23] will try to assist the City of New Orleans
[24] in getting additional funds for the
[25] Florida Avenue bridge if the time program

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[1] is extended. Right now, there is
[2] insufficient funds in the time program to
[3] construct that bridge. The amount
[4] appropriated for the bridge was for a
[5] grade-level structure, not a
[6] semi-high-rise or a high-rise bridge. But
[7] we fully support the Corps in doing this
[8] project. Thank you.

[9] **COLONEL CONNER:**

[10] Thank you.

[11] **MR. DICHARRY:**

[12] Brendan Gallagher.

[13] Brendan Gallagher.

[14] (No response.)

[15] Captain Dean Bruch

[16] I know I mispronounced that one.

[17] **MR. BRUCH:**

[18] I'm Dean Bruch. I've
[19] been residing in Louisiana here since
[20] 1951, other than seven years' break as a
[21] Panama Canal pilot. I'm married and have
[22] - married in 51. I got my wife here;
[23] started chasing her when she was a
[24] passenger on a ship back then. Caught her
[25] twice, got two kids and four

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[1] grandchildren. I still live in River
[2] Ridge and I piloted on the Gulf Outlet
[3] from '66 to '77 and also on the river up
[4] to Baton Rouge. My last assignment was on
[5] the AMERICAN QUEEN going out the Houma
[6] Navigation Canal and up the river. I've
[7] been associated with the maritime industry
[8] for 53 years, being a graduate of
[9] Kingspoint.

[10] I'm not in support of
[11] this proposed lock replacement project,
[12] foremost reason being it would be a
[13] band-aid remedy for a serious problem. I
[14] believe an organized port development and
[15] efficient marine traffic management
[16] coupled with long-range planning would
[17] serve the Port of New Orleans's needs for
[18] the next hundred years.

[19] I wish to quote a letter
[20] I wrote to the Times-Picayune dated
[21] December the 10th, and it wasn't printed.
[22] It was, "I read with interest your
[23] excellent TP article of December the 8th
[24] entitled 'Industrial Upgrade.' I'm in
[25] accord with State Representative Sherman

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[1] Copeland, let them put the new locks
[2] somewhere else. The most practical
[3] solution to this problem is to build new
[4] locks as planned over 30 years ago at the
[5] Violet site. A lock in the Violet area
[6] with a channel over to the "Mr. Go" will
[7] allow the environmental disaster known as
[8] the "Mr. Go" to be closed below the
[9] intersection of the lock channel with the
[10] outlet and stop the saltwater intrusion
[11] into Lake Pontchartrain. Additionally,
[12] this will eliminate vessel wake from
[13] destroying the remainder of the marshland
[14] in lower St. Bernard Parish. It is true
[15] there will be an outcry from the maritime
[16] industry, their allies, the Port of New
[17] Orleans and the Louisiana Department of
[18] Transportation & Development, the Corps of
[19] Engineers, the Coast Guard, and last but
[20] not least, the St. Bernard Council.
[21] Unfortunately, these groups has
[22] consistently through the years refused to
[23] establish common sense speed limits in the
[24] "Mr. Go" channel which has greatly
[25] contributed to these eroding wetlands.

[1] "With a new lock channel
[2] built and established speed limits to
[3] protect the banks in the lock channel, it
[4] will add to the transit time of vessels
[5] between sea and Industrial Canal complex
[6] but I see this as a viable alternative to
[7] the bottleneck. The positive side for
[8] construction of the lock at Violet I
[9] believe would be shorter time and would
[10] create obviously less environmental impact
[11] for residents in that area than in Orleans
[12] Parish. Leaving the Industrial Canal lock
[13] in place, having a large ship within twin
[14] chambers at Violet, that's in case when
[15] you overhaul where you can be using your
[16] other chamber, will certainly enhance
[17] navigation flow between the Mississippi
[18] River and Intracoastal Waterway as well as
[19] the Industrial Canal complex. However, I
[20] don't believe the citizens of St Bernard
[21] should allow the Violet lock to be
[22] constructed without closure of the "Mr.
[23] Go" to protect the lock canal waters from
[24] saltwater intrusion and area flooding."
[25] My brief comments on the

[1] lock here, designing and building locks,
[2] the Corps of Engineers are past masters of
[3] this art. The Panama Canal locks built in
[4] 1913, first time an engineering
[5] accomplishment without parallel. This
[6] model 110 feet by 1,000 feet was even used
[7] for the 26 locks on the upper Mississippi
[8] River between St. Louis and Minneapolis.
[9] I have been through every one of them on
[10] the DELTA QUEEN. I'm sure the proposed
[11] new lock as far as engineering will be of
[12] the same quality. The environmental
[13] issues associated with this proposed new
[14] lock is not my expertise. And I'm sure
[15] the pros and cons will be adequately
[16] addressed at this public meeting, and how.
[17] However, from an overall navigation
[18] environmental standpoint, in my opinion,
[19] the proposed lock replacement site does
[20] not answer the maritime industry and
[21] general public needs. An alternate site
[22] should be addressed.
[23] Thank you for allowing me
[24] to offer these comments. Please don't
[25] throw rocks at Lucy and I after we leave.

[1] We are lovers and not fighters and only
[2] trying to present what we think is in the
[3] best interests of the Port of New Orleans
[4] and, most of all, the general public who
[5] we dearly love.
[6] COLONEL CONNER:
[7] Thank you, sir.
[8] MR. DICHARRY:
[9] John Koefel.
[10] MR. KOEFERL:
[11] My name is John Koefel.
[12] I live at 415 Tupelo Street. I am
[13] chairperson of the Holy Cross Neighborhood
[14] Association. I see that a lot of our
[15] members have grown weary of the
[16] proceedings. I think they wanted to have
[17] more chance to speak than we're allowed
[18] here and more time to read these ponderous
[19] volumes.
[20] I would like to make just
[21] a comment before I make my remarks about
[22] the video, which has my name in it and the
[23] names of other people of the working
[24] group. This implies that we are in favor
[25] of this project, that we worked hand in

[1] hand with the Corps and the other City
[2] Planning Commission to develop this
[3] project. In fact, I think that we are
[4] against this project. As we learned more
[5] about it, we said, "Hey, this is crazy.
[6] We're not going to do this." And yet our
[7] name is up here touting this project. And
[8] I think, Colonel, rather than removing our
[9] name, I think you should tell the truth.
[10] We are not in favor of this project. The
[11] group, the Neighborhood Working Group, is,
[12] all the people that came to the meetings,
[13] against this project.
[14] I would like to just talk
[15] briefly about the historic aspect of this
[16] project. You know, we live in the
[17] Crescent City, and this is a city that
[18] people love to visit. We like to consider
[19] it a really special city. But, you know,
[20] it's not that big. When we talk about the
[21] growth of our city into the next 50 years,
[22] the next 100 years, 200 years, we can't be
[23] lopping off parts of them and seeing them
[24] be destroyed because we're having these
[25] highways of the river come through with

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[1] these huge ships over our neighborhood
 [2] with the noise not just for the project
 [3] time, not just for 10 or 15 years, but
 [4] forever.
 [5] Have you ever been
 [6] through Treme on the Claiborne Expressway?
 [7] This is a federal project, okay, the
 [8] Claiborne Expressway in Treme. And not
 [9] only has this neighborhood been destroyed,
 [10] but can you believe that it was not part,
 [11] the destruction of this neighborhood, part
 [12] of the project cost. And yet it is a cost
 [13] that our city has borne with this project
 [14] and many other projects and will continue
 [15] to bear for the life of the city until
 [16] more - more costs is going to be when
 [17] they go to want to do something else with
 [18] the I-10. What will there be, another
 [19] project. or will that just be a dinosaur
 [20] left there in our midst?
 [21] We are concerned that our
 [22] neighborhood is going to be disabled and
 [23] destroyed, property values down. Nobody
 [24] wants to live here. The big sea wall, a
 [25] danger from unknown cargoes, and also this

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[1] project with deep draft and widening of
 [2] the canal enhances the use - enhances -
 [3] intensifies the use of "Mr. Go." And we
 [4] know about the continued destruction of
 [5] the marshland and what kind of project
 [6] cost was that? Who has borne the project
 [7] cost for that? Not the Corps of Engineers
 [8] obviously.
 [9] We would rather have the
 [10] old Ursuline Convent and the Andrea
 [11] Plantation than we would have the St.
 [12] Claude bridge and the locks. But that is
 [13] all that we're left with. And we don't
 [14] want to see them go. If you can't live
 [15] with the canal being the way it is, then
 [16] we feel that you should close it. It's as
 [17] simple as that. We are tired of this.
 [18] You know, sometimes, what
 [19] I would like to see is a form of request,
 [20] the Corps of Engineers in this project
 [21] make a true project cost of what hundreds
 [22] of years, fifty years, a hundred years,
 [23] many hundreds of years' loss of the
 [24] neighborhoods of our city are going to be
 [25] for tourism and for other things besides

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[1] this linear transportation scheme. And
 [2] what's going to happen in 50 years to this
 [3] canal? Is it going to be updated? Is it
 [4] going to be junked? What's going to
 [5] happen in a hundred years? We're going to
 [6] go to Violet anyway maybe. What's going
 [7] to happen? Has anybody thought of this?
 [8] You know, if we tear our neighborhoods
 [9] apart, and we just have a small window of
 [10] opportunity right now to fix up our
 [11] neighborhoods and save them and bring them
 [12] into the next century, this isn't
 [13] something that we can spend all our time
 [14] fighting this canal on and see it happen
 [15] without our participation. We've got work
 [16] to do and we keep fighting this thing. It
 [17] just is aggravating.
 [18] A true cost to this city,
 [19] that's what this project needs to develop.
 [20] and there hasn't been any treatment of the
 [21] historic cost except \$300,000 for some
 [22] documentation of the St. Claude bridge
 [23] being taken down and the locks. But
 [24] there's no project cost for continued tens
 [25] of years of our having to have a depleted

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[1] neighborhood because of that. I want to
 [2] say that this study is not complete, it's
 [3] not effective, it's not efficient, and
 [4] it's not acceptable.
 [5] COLONEL CONNER:
 [6] Thank you, sir.
 [7] MR. DICHARRY:
 [8] Pam Dashiell.
 [9] MS. DASHIELL:
 [10] Joe, Pat, Colonel, it's
 [11] good to see you again, I guess. We've
 [12] been meeting all these years and here we
 [13] are back at the same place. And the way
 [14] we feel has not changed. We don't want
 [15] this project. We're not going to have
 [16] this project. The rules seem to have
 [17] changed right in the middle of the game.
 [18] At one point, we were told that if the
 [19] community didn't want it, we wouldn't have
 [20] it. If the community stood fast against
 [21] it, it would not happen. That's not what
 [22] you're saying now. There has been a real
 [23] change in this, and it's unfair. It makes
 [24] us mistrust you and it just intensifies
 [25] the fact that we do not want this project.

[1] A good example of this is
[2] this process itself. As Mark Cooper and
[3] some others have mentioned, the dates were
[4] shifted on this. There was not good
[5] notification. It's scheduled for the day
[6] after Superbowl. A lot of people, most of
[7] the people down here work in service
[8] industries. They've just come off of a
[9] week of double shifts. People cannot come
[10] out and stay until 10:00 o'clock at some
[11] meeting. The times were terrible for
[12] this.

[13] You said that the people,
[14] the working groups were part of this
[15] process as shown in your video. That's
[16] not true. Yes, we met. We met a lot.
[17] But that does not mean that we condone
[18] what the result is, absolutely not.

[19] There are also some other
[20] issues. The projects that are correlated
[21] with this appear to be just pie in the
[22] sky. You talk about the Florida bridge
[23] being completed before it's even started.
[24] The lady from the Transportation
[25] Department just said that there's no money

[1] for the Florida bridge. It's just, it's
[2] talk. All it is is talk. There are no
[3] real, concrete plans. The transportation
[4] studies are incomplete. The studies on
[5] the toxicity that you will expose when you
[6] do the digging, those things are not well
[7] documented. The people who are working
[8] with us can't make heads or tails of it in
[9] some senses. It's not real. Your costs
[10] and benefits are all mixed up. You're
[11] saying that what our benefits - rather,
[12] you are saying that what is good is bad.
[13] You're saying that the benefits are the
[14] costs, that the costs are the benefits.
[15] It's all mixed up. Apparently you're
[16] intentionally trying to confuse people
[17] down here.

[18] As far as the mitigation
[19] plan itself, outrageous. Looking at that
[20] budget, you've got 1.5 million going back
[21] to the RTA. You've got three million for
[22] debris removal. These are project costs,
[23] payments to institutions. That's not
[24] mitigation for us.

[25] The damage that you'll do

[1] with the plans are not calculateable. The
[2] levee, that's something that we all enjoy.
[3] That would be gone. That would be gone.
[4] A sea wall on top of the levee? Even
[5] looking at what you had in that video, it
[6] was ugly. And a real good example of that
[7] is what's happened on top of the St.
[8] Claude bridge right now. There's a fence
[9] up there, it looks like Auschwitz. It's
[10] terrible. It's dangerous. It's terrible.
[11] It was done without input from the
[12] community. There was no good reason for
[13] it except your own liability. You didn't
[14] think about us at all.

[15] The noise abatement that
[16] you talk about in the mitigation plan
[17] seems like it's not enough. Maybe it will
[18] work. Maybe not. But it seems like it's
[19] more pie in the sky. The deep-draft
[20] shipping, that's outrageous, too.
[21] Remember the Riverwalk. Remember the
[22] Riverwalk. What would happen if a big
[23] ship like that hit our levee? What would
[24] happen?

[25] You were right about one

[1] thing the other night, Colonel, the
[2] approval or disapproval for this project
[3] is now in the hands of Washington, our
[4] congresspeople, all of our elected
[5] officials. We need to call them. We need
[6] to write them. We need to go there. But
[7] we can't let this happen.

[8] COLONEL CONNER:

[9] Thank you, ma'am.

[10] MR. DICHARRY:

[11] Edward Starks. Edward
[12] Starks.

[13] (No response.)

[14] Joseph Cannaliato?

[15] (No response.)

[16] Al Hanzo.

[17] MR. HANZO:

[18] I've been a lifetime

[19] resident of the Holy Cross area right here
[20] in the neighborhood and I want to talk
[21] about "Mr. Go." From the very first time
[22] I heard the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet
[23] was going to be dredged, I felt and still
[24] feel the whole project was one of the
[25] biggest mistakes the Corps of Engineers

(1) and the federal government brought upon
(2) all the residents of this area. We were
(3) told by the federal authorities that the
(4) Mississippi River Gulf Outlet was a very
(5) much-needed project. It was supposed to
(6) open up new wharfage and business spaces
(7) along the outlet. But in the span of over
(8) 30 years, hardly any of this has become a
(9) reality. The "Mr. Go" project has brought
(10) a great deal of fear in the minds and
(11) hearts of most of the residents of the
(12) Lower Ninth Ward.

(13) Best example was
(14) Hurricane Betsy in September of 1965. The
(15) water came straight up the Mississippi
(16) River Gulf Outlet from the Gulf into the
(17) Industrial Canal where we were told the
(18) levee broke near the Claiborne bridge. We
(19) had about 11 feet of water at Florida
(20) Avenue to about one foot of water on
(21) Dauphine Street. It extended from the
(22) Industrial Canal well into St. Bernard
(23) Parish.

(24) The point that I am
(25) trying to get across is, I feel the

(1) federal government should have had enough
(2) foresight and knowledge to be able to see
(3) what dangers this waterway has brought
(4) upon all the people of the Lower Ninth
(5) Ward, also, the tremendous erosion
(6) problems that were caused by the outlet
(7) from the Gulf to the Intracoastal
(8) Waterway, literally eating up miles and
(9) miles of our marshland.

(10) If and when this bridge
(11) and lock project would become a reality, I
(12) hope you will give the residents of this
(13) area a lot more consideration than you did
(14) with the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. I
(15) am against the new bridges at St. Claude
(16) and Claiborne. I have lived in the
(17) neighborhood, in the Holy Cross
(18) neighborhood, all of my 68 years and can
(19) look back at all the many good times and
(20) friends that were made. I always hoped I
(21) could spend the balance of my life in this
(22) good old neighborhood. I'm certainly not
(23) ready to give up nine or ten years of the
(24) inconveniences that this bridge and lock
(25) project will bring.

(1) I have one question.
(2) Does the Corps of Engineers have any plans
(3) in the near future to correct or lessen
(4) the big erosion problems that exist along
(5) the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet? If so,
(6) what are they? Thank you.

(7) COLONEL CONNER:

(8) Thank you, sir.

(9) MR. DICHARRY:

(10) James Guilbeau. James

(11) Guilbeau.

(12) (No response.)

(13) Doug Svenson.

(14) MR. SVENSON:

(15) Thank you, Colonel
(16) Conner. I appreciate the opportunity to
(17) be here. My name is Doug Svenson. I
(18) represent the Gulf Intracoastal Canal
(19) Association. The Gulf Intracoastal
(20) Waterway is a major Gulf of Mexico
(21) tributary that travels from the state of
(22) Texas at the Mexican-U.S. border all along
(23) the five Gulf Coast states to near St.
(24) Marks, Florida, where the state of Florida
(25) begins its bend to the south. Our

(1) association comprises roughly 250
(2) companies and thousands of employees who
(3) use and depend on the Industrial Lock on
(4) the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway on the
(5) Mississippi River and all of the
(6) connecting tributaries.

(7) One of the truly
(8) remarkable things I believe that a project
(9) such as the Industrial Lock and any lock
(10) in fact on our river system where there's
(11) the Ohio River or the Mississippi River is
(12) the fact that the Congress requires by law
(13) the Corps of Engineers do a calculation of
(14) the cost and the benefits of each of those
(15) projects, waterways as well as locks, and
(16) conclude that there is a favorable
(17) benefit-to-cost ratio before any federal
(18) money is spent. Now, the federal
(19) government year in and year out spends
(20) roughly 1.6 trillion dollars every 12
(21) months. Next year it will be 1.7
(22) trillion. The year after that it will be
(23) close to 1.8 trillion. And so far, the
(24) only program in the entire federal
(25) government is yours which is required by

[1] federal law to come up with a positive
[2] benefit-cost ratio which means that it
[3] benefits all of the communities, local,
[4] state and regional, more than it costs.
[5] Some projects have benefit-cost ratios of
[6] a favorable nature of four or five or six
[7] to one. Other projects range from eight,
[8] nine, ten to one. There is one particular
[9] project in Vermilion Parish that the New
[10] Orleans District is working on with our
[11] industry right now which has a favorable
[12] benefit-cost ratio of 25 to 37 to one.
[13] Now, that's a good expenditure of federal
[14] money.

[15] In the economic analysis
[16] that your district has done of the
[17] replacement of this lock, there are four
[18] principal commodities that I have noticed
[19] that are important to the Gulf South
[20] region of the United States. One is coal.
[21] Another is crude oil. Another is refined
[22] crude oil or refined petroleum products,
[23] motor gasoline, jet fuel, diesel, naphtha,
[24] et cetera, and the fourth is chemicals,
[25] industrial chemicals. Those four

[1] commodities transit the Industrial Lock.
[2] They come from upriver. They come from
[3] east, Mobile. They come from west. But
[4] they are all key ingredients in the
[5] generation of electricity, in the
[6] production of motor gasoline and jet fuel,
[7] and in the production of industrial
[8] chemicals that are used probably to make
[9] things such as that screen, that
[10] basketball backboard, any number of
[11] plastic products that are in this room
[12] that make our life much more convenient
[13] and provide us that convenience at very
[14] cheap cost. That's the benefits to the
[15] economy.

[16] We're going to supplement
[17] or at least I'm going to supplement this
[18] statement for the record by your date of
[19] the 24th, but I just wanted to make those
[20] points about the overall value and benefit
[21] of the waterway.

[22] And incidentally, to
[23] point out that there is a real risk right
[24] now in terms of delays to transportation,
[25] higher cost to consumers, and safety

[1] factors in the condition in which we find
[2] the Industrial Lock today. It's broken.
[3] I had an old car one time. It kept
[4] starting every morning. My wife told me I
[5] needed to get a new one and I said no, I
[6] don't. It still goes ten blocks. Well, a
[7] light failed on it, and then the generator
[8] went out and then another belt broke. And
[9] I kept getting it fixed and finally I
[10] decided it wasn't worth fixing. You just
[11] have to build a new one. And that's what
[12] has to be done with this facility.

[13] The last thing I want to
[14] say is this: I've been sitting here for
[15] three hours. I've learned a good lesson.
[16] It is real excruciatingly difficult to
[17] come into somebody else's neighborhood and
[18] tell them how things ought to be. I live
[19] in Lafayette right now. That's where the
[20] offices of GICA are located, although in
[21] about two or three months I'm moving to
[22] New Orleans where I, too, can be favorably
[23] disadvantaged by your project but I'll
[24] still support it.

[25] In Lafayette, the way

[1] that that community has developed - I
[2] just want to cite this as an example that
[3] I can understand the feelings that these
[4] people have - half of the city is on the
[5] east side of the Vermilion River. The
[6] other half of Lafayette is on the west
[7] side. And there aren't enough bridges.
[8] There's a bridge way over to the west and
[9] a bridge way over to the east. So you
[10] find traffic making big oval loops to get
[11] around from one part of the city to the
[12] next because there's no bridge here in the
[13] middle where it needs to be. There's a
[14] beautiful street called Camellia Avenue
[15] that runs from one of the main
[16] thoroughfares towards the Vermilion River.
[17] It has beautiful homes on it, big live oak
[18] trees, and Camellia is proposed to be
[19] essentially condemned and widened so that
[20] a new bridge can be built across the
[21] Vermilion River. The residents don't like
[22] it in that neighborhood one single bit,
[23] but the bridge is going to be built
[24] because there is a recognition of a
[25] greater need of the city and the community

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(1) in general. Thank you.

(2) COLONEL CONNER:

(3) Thank you, sir.

(4) MR. DICHARRY:

(5) Henry Ponstein.

(6) MR. PONSTEIN:

(7) Thank you. The Florida

(8) Avenue bridge and corridor at the Paris

(9) Road has been talked about since the WPA

(10) days; still not there. The St. Claude

(11) tunnel used to be the campaign promises

(12) from a governor nearly 50 years ago. They

(13) finally gave up having it as a campaign

(14) promise. Now, the Mississippi River Gulf

(15) Outlet I think was a big mistake. And I

(16) have to give credit to the Colonel at that

(17) time of the Corps of Engineers, talking to

(18) him after that hearing we had down in St.

(19) Bernard, he said, "That was the worst

(20) location because they will never be able

(21) to keep it deep enough because it will

(22) keep caving in from Paris Road down to

(23) past Violet." And he was correct about

(24) it. That was before it was dug. And I

(25) said, "Well, why are they doing it?" I

(1) Westbank, those two canals has tunnels

(2) underneath. Why can't we put a tunnel

(3) under the St. Claude Avenue bridge? They

(4) talked about it for years. You put it on

(5) the Westbank on the two Intracoastal

(6) waterways. They even made a tunnel from

(7) England to France. You certainly could

(8) make this tunnel with the neutral ground;

(9) wouldn't disturb anything for traffic

(10) around the area here. And you can put the

(11) new locks, if you look at your plans, you

(12) have room to put it right next to the old

(13) locks. You have a tunnel there. Put the

(14) new locks right next to it, and you can

(15) move the barge traffic between in both

(16) locks and you wouldn't have to disturb the

(17) other bridges, you wouldn't have to

(18) disturb the neighborhoods. And it's meant

(19) for the Intracoastal Waterways, not for

(20) ships. And if you use it for the barge

(21) traffic and put that new locks next to the

(22) present locks, if you look on your plan,

(23) you wouldn't have to move houses. You

(24) wouldn't even have to change the Claiborne

(25) bridge. But you do need a high-level

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(1) said. "To give more wharfage to the Dock

(2) Board in New Orleans?" He said, "That's

(3) politics." That was after the meeting.

(4) He couldn't say it during the meeting.

(5) I'm sure you can't say it either.

(6) Now, what you say about

(7) breakwater. like with all the trees before

(8) the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet in

(9) Betsy? Most of the trees was killed by

(10) the saltwater. and that's why that water

(11) rushed in and we got flooded in the Ninth

(12) Ward and St. Bernard. And now it has

(13) become even worse and New Orleans is

(14) worried about getting flooded because now

(15) they won't even put a Red Cross shelter in

(16) New Orleans. They said they wouldn't be

(17) protected if a real hurricane came and hit

(18) the right way because there's nothing to

(19) stop the water from coming in. So the

(20) outlet is a joke, a failure.

(21) Now, the Intracoastal

(22) waterways, which is the Industrial Canal,

(23) that's for barge traffic and it's in the

(24) center of where the Algiers locks and the

(25) Harvey locks are. Now, those on the

(1) bridge at Florida, and it would be a lot

(2) less costly, lot less inconvenient to the

(3) people in the neighborhood. It would help

(4) out all kind of ways and keep it just for

(5) barge traffic which is needed as part of

(6) the Intracoastal Waterways. And you look

(7) at your plan. You could put it next to

(8) the present locks and wouldn't have to

(9) disturb any homes or anything and it

(10) wouldn't cost the taxpayers much money.

(11) Thank you.

(12) COLONEL CONNER:

(13) Thank you, sir.

(14) MR. DICHARRY:

(15) Georgianna Gray.

(16) UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

(17) My name isn't Georgia

(18) Gray. I'm Georgia (inaudible - away from

(19) microphone). And I'd just like to say one

(20) thing. We've been promised on a national

(21) level that there would be no more

(22) destruction of our wetlands. We were

(23) going to save the wetlands. The president

(24) has said so. Everybody has said so. But

(25) yet we launch these irresponsible plans,

[1] plans where we don't know the
[2] repercussions We know what happened in
[3] St. Bernard Parish and the damage that has
[4] been done. All this petroleum this
[5] gentleman is talking about transporting
[6] and all the great things it's going to
[7] make, like this video, I mean this screen,
[8] will it make a cypress tree? In
[9] Louisiana, we have more wetlands, we have
[10] more wildlife, we used to at least, but
[11] now everything is getting destroyed.
[12] Who's going to look out for us? Who's
[13] going to look out for the wildlife? You
[14] know, everybody likes to go duck hunting
[15] up in Minnesota or wherever, but those
[16] birds have to migrate down here somewhere,
[17] and if they don't have their habitat, if
[18] that is all destroyed, then, you know,
[19] we're losing a great part of nature, not
[20] just neighborhoods, not to mention the
[21] fact that we have a great historic
[22] neighborhood here. The city of New
[23] Orleans is a small place but it has a
[24] great history, and we are going to destroy
[25] this - The Battle of New Orleans was

[1] fought right in between, right there on
[2] the river. Now, let's find another place
[3] for this. You know, let's quit picking on
[4] Louisiana. Just find another way. But
[5] stop destroying the nature. Stop
[6] destroying the environment. Thank you.
[7] COLONEL CONNER:
[8] Thank you, ma'am. Excuse
[9] me, ma'am, could you tell us your last
[10] name again so we could put it in the
[11] record? Could you spell that?
[12] (Answer inaudible - speaker
[13] away from microphone.)
[14] COLONEL CONNER:
[15] Thank you.
[16] MR. DICHARRY:
[17] Edith Leibe?
[18] (No response.)
[19] D. L. Bell?
[20] (No response.)
[21] Philip Daley?
[22] (No response.)
[23] Marietta Williams?
[24] MS. WILLIAMS.
[25] My name is Marietta

[1] Williams. I live at 6116 North Roman
[2] Street and I've lived in the Lower Ninth
[3] Ward except for, well, since 1957 or
[4] thereabouts except for two years and I
[5] moved back, we moved back here in about
[6] 1991, I believe. At any rate, I had some
[7] concerns that I wanted to register
[8] tonight.
[9] One is regarding the
[10] bridge. Several of the people from St.
[11] Bernard mentioned about the bridge that
[12] would come through there that would put an
[13] exit in the Lower Ninth Ward but not an
[14] entrance. As I've told you before, when
[15] I've attended some of your meetings, this
[16] is one of my biggest concerns. I was here
[17] in 1965 during the hurricane. We did have
[18] to walk out in waist-high water.
[19] One of my biggest
[20] concerns is safety, the fact that if we
[21] are going to look at any type plan at all,
[22] that it must include something where we
[23] have a high-rise through here that
[24] provides an entrance and an exit for the
[25] Lower Ninth Ward, not just an exit. I do

[1] feel that we are deserving of this. We
[2] leave, although when you hear the radio
[3] announcement, it will say like St. Bernard
[4] or something like that, but we all, many
[5] of us work in this area, too, and we have
[6] to get out to get to work and get our
[7] children to school. So I think this is
[8] one of the things that we have to look at.
[9] The other thing, just as
[10] an aside, I wish you'd let all the
[11] residents speak before you let the
[12] politicians speak, too. I thought it
[13] would have been better.
[14] The other thing, I feel
[15] that that bridge entrance and exit has
[16] everything, and I know we continue to hear
[17] people say it that it has nothing to do
[18] with that, but I feel it has everything to
[19] do with it when you're dealing with
[20] safety, whichever part of this Lower Ninth
[21] Ward you live in.
[22] The other thing is that I
[23] do think we have to look at the economics
[24] that are there. Unfortunately, if you
[25] come down St. Claude, I live on the other

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[1] side of Claiborne Avenue, it seems like
[2] the only business over there, or I
[3] shouldn't say business, I don't use it,
[4] but the only industry or whatever, I
[5] should say, looks like a lot with drug
[6] treatment programs or something like that.
[7] To me, these are dead-end things. They're
[8] questionable.

[9] And I think we have to
[10] address the economic issues that are here.
[11] I think it's a very serious issue that we
[12] have to look at in terms of getting maybe
[13] a school down here for training people for
[14] things, so in that particular way, I do
[15] think that we have to look at this program
[16] in terms of what it can do economically.

[17] Environmentally, I do
[18] think that there are a lot of things that
[19] do have to be addressed because we have to
[20] be able to live in conjunction with our
[21] environment.

[22] The other thing, and
[23] because you mentioned about the dredging,
[24] I did have a question about that and I did
[25] wonder about, when you dredge the river or

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[1] whatever it is that you would do there,
[2] when those snows start to melt in other
[3] places, would it mean that we would be
[4] like a cup sitting in the bottom of a, you
[5] know, a saucer or a cup sitting at the
[6] bottom, just sitting at the bottom? I
[7] would like to know that to wonder whether
[8] if you dredge, would those waters go
[9] underneath the houses that are by the
[10] levee? What kind of protections would be
[11] provided for that?

[12] One other thing that you
[13] mentioned was 33 million dollars for
[14] mitigation which I really don't think is
[15] anywhere near what would be needed, but
[16] your initial thing said Holy
[17] Cross/Bywater/Lower 9, I may have it
[18] wrong, I think I may have left out one
[19] part, but then it said 8.5 million or 8.4
[20] million towards St. Bernard. So it
[21] doesn't even leave 33 million that you're
[22] talking about. You're talking about one
[23] third of 33 million dollars, which is even
[24] less. And those are my comments. Thank
[25] you.

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COLONEL CONNER:

[1] Thank you, ma'am.

MR. DICHARRY:

[2] Stacy Rockwood.

[3] (No response.)

[4] Elaine Jackson.

[5] (No response.)

[6] Geneva Morris.

MS. MORRIS: "

[7] My name is Geneva Morris.

[8] I've been in the Ninth Ward since 1961.

[9] First of all, I'm on St. Claude Street

[10] right near the bridge, and these pamphlets "

[11] I got here tonight from someone, nobody

[12] received this. This was, they put all of

[13] the pamphlets at St. Maurice Villa where

[14] all the old people there are. Nobody that

[15] really needed to get this got it. So I'm

[16] not prepared tonight with any written

[17] statement or anything like that because if

[18] it wasn't for Father Hall, I wouldn't even

[19] know this meeting was going on here

[20] tonight. And then I wouldn't have known

[21] you all had this little meeting with some

[22] of the people in the neighborhood. And I

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[1] think that I should have known about the
[2] private meeting because I have property on
[3] St. Claude between Forstall and Lizardi
[4] and that's right in the midst of
[5] everything that you're going to be doing.
[6] And, you know, you just don't put any
[7] information out where it should be. So I
[8] don't know who you expect to be at the
[9] meetings, you know. I see you had all
[10] these other folk here that does not even
[11] live in the area, and they're only
[12] concerned about their welfare. And then
[13] we comes after everybody gone to say what
[14] we - to give our concern about our
[15] neighborhood and here we live here. We're
[16] going to be greatly affected.

[17] You were talking about
[18] the jobs and, you know, that the people in
[19] the neighborhood would have jobs. They
[20] won't be there to do the work. Where
[21] would you place them? They won't even be
[22] in the neighborhood, you know, because
[23] you're going to - they're going to have
[24] to move out before they would even be
[25] there to get a job. And what I'm

[1] concerned about is all of the people in
[2] the area, and especially the people that
[3] have their livelihoods there. I put all
[4] my money in the Lower Ninth Ward on St.
[5] Claude Avenue. I have four businesses on
[6] St. Claude Avenue in the same area. And I
[7] have grandchildren. I have a grandson
[8] that's a barber that's come into the
[9] beauty salon with me. I have my other
[10] grandson who opened the business next door
[11] there. We're opening another little
[12] business on the other side. You're trying
[13] to do things, at least you can employ
[14] people and train people to be employed but
[15] then you can't - There are monies that we
[16] need to even just repair some of the
[17] things that you have. You're not going to
[18] get a bank to give you any monies to put
[19] in the Lower Ninth Ward or anybody to give
[20] you any money or to loan you any money to
[21] even repair your places because they know
[22] that you all keep threatening us and
[23] you're holding I'd say a hammer over our
[24] heads that any minute you'll just lower
[25] the boom.

[1] So then I don't know what
[2] you expect for people to do. Poor people,
[3] the Lower Ninth Ward is already, just is
[4] barricaded off like a prison. And we
[5] don't have much activities down there
[6] anyway and people go down there. When
[7] Betsy came, a lot of people left the
[8] neighborhood, and it's been going down
[9] ever since. I was in Betsy. I'm not that
[10] tall but I'm 5'2" and I had to be carried
[11] out because the water was over my head.
[12] And I had my children. And I think it's
[13] not fair for you to come in a neighborhood
[14] and say, well, we're going to just come
[15] here and this is where - I mean, you had
[16] St. Bernard. You could have put it down
[17] there. And I understand that you said,
[18] you know, like this lady doesn't want the
[19] wetlands and all of that disturbed, the
[20] fisheries and the crabs and everything
[21] else. So I don't know what we're
[22] considered as in the neighborhood. You
[23] know, so you say, well, no, I won't do St.
[24] Bernard. I'll come and do the Lower Ninth
[25] Ward.

[1] And I'm not talking about
[2] race. It's predominantly black and poor,
[3] old people, and young folk are moving out
[4] of the area because they know what you
[5] plan to do.
[6] So you're just killing
[7] everything. I think that you could go in
[8] the wetlands and I think you could do what
[9] you need to do down in that area. I would
[10] like to see you go someplace else. And
[11] then what you're doing now is saying
[12] you're going to put a bridge back on
[13] Florida Avenue, and it seem like you
[14] really going to put the bridge - That
[15] would be fine because it's not, you know,
[16] use just that space back there but you're
[17] still going to have some problems with the
[18] people that live on Florida Avenue, unless
[19] you're going to go further over, and over,
[20] and then you're going to come down in St.
[21] Bernard Parish. Then you're going to
[22] impact Tupelo Street. Then all the
[23] traffic going to come down Tupelo Street
[24] where I live. Then you're going to come
[25] to St. Claude Street where I have my

[1] business and you're going to run me away
[2] from there.
[3] I don't think you want me
[4] down here, you know. And I feel really
[5] bad about that. And I have - my
[6] grandchildren are coming along and saying,
[7] well, maybe my grandmother, because my
[8] husband died 19 months ago, so it leaves
[9] me there fighting you all by myself.
[10] I hate even to talk to anybody about it
[11] because I say, well, I'm a big girl. I
[12] can handle whatever has to be done. But
[13] look like you all are kind of bigger than
[14] us with the money and all, you know, and
[15] being able to come and just push us out.
[16] Now, one thing you didn't
[17] say on there is, I remember years ago when
[18] we had Mayor Morial in office, you talked
[19] about the widening of the Industrial Canal
[20] and the bridge. You said that the bridge
[21] would come and it would come down at
[22] Caffin Avenue. If it comes down at Caffin
[23] Avenue, well, I'm going to be under the
[24] bridge. And then they talked then about
[25] not giving you anything because they won't

[1] touch your property so you'll just be
 [2] right down by the bridge trying to run a
 [3] business. And you weren't supposed to
 [4] give us anything for it because we
 [5] wouldn't be affected. We're going to be
 [6] affected in any way you go.
 [7] The two years? What are
 [8] we going to do while you're constructing
 [9] - just the two years. If it was six
 [10] months, do you know, I wouldn't have any
 [11] monies to live off of? And then it's
 [12] awful. And I think that you all could do
 [13] better than that and I wish you would do
 [14] better than that. And when you have a
 [15] meeting, let people know. I'm at 5119 St.
 [16] Claude Street all day and half the night.
 [17] In the beauty salon and in the area,
 [18] nothing like this came. St. Maurice Villa
 [19] is way over on St. Maurice, way out of -
 [20] well, not out of the way but away from
 [21] where you're going to be coming down.
 [22] Had I known that I could
 [23] have prepared myself to come and speak
 [24] intelligently and say, you know, and
 [25] prepare myself, but I'm not prepared but

[1] I'm just telling you what I have on my
 [2] mind on the top of my head.
 [3] And then, I was looking
 [4] at, wondering what was your plans for, you
 [5] know, like we're right there at the
 [6] Industrial Canal. When you start, if you
 [7] ever get to that point, and you're going
 [8] to be building the bridge, what kind of
 [9] monies - Are you going to move us
 [10] someplace else, pay cash for the building
 [11] that we're going to go in, give us a lot
 [12] of money to hold us until we build another
 [13] business and then pay us for our
 [14] aggravation? The money you're talking
 [15] about is not enough just for me and
 [16] because, you know, I worked hard. I
 [17] worked hard. I worked scraping windows,
 [18] cleaning toilets, selling real estate,
 [19] going to college, trying to get an
 [20] education, trying to send my children to
 [21] school. I did all of that, and then I put
 [22] my money on St. Claude Street and then you
 [23] come and tell me that I can't stay there.
 [24] I don't think that's fair.

[25] COLONEL CONNER:

[1] Thank you, ma'am.
 [2] MR. DICHARRY:
 [3] Steven Reimer?
 [4] MR. REIMER:
 [5] Hello. My name is Steven
 [6] Reimer. My wife and I live at 3420
 [7] Burgundy in the Bywater District. My wife
 [8] and I are fairly active in the Bywater
 [9] Neighborhood Association.
 [10] Instead of making general
 [11] comments about your project, I'd like to
 [12] address myself to what I regard as a very
 [13] specific flaw in the environmental
 [14] analysis and ask that it be addressed in
 [15] any supplement that may be forthcoming. I
 [16] also confine myself to the area west of
 [17] the Industrial Canal simply because I do
 [18] not know the Holy Cross area, the area
 [19] that's east, but I believe that the
 [20] effects are much the same.
 [21] Your project clearly
 [22] acknowledges that you're going to have
 [23] severe impacts on the St. Claude corridor,
 [24] and in attempting to mitigate those
 [25] damages, you intend to perform some street

[1] work, some repaving of St. Claude and also
 [2] I believe some repaving of Franklin
 [3] Avenue. While I'm in favor of that
 [4] mitigation, I believe that the underlying
 [5] assumption to that is not correct, and
 [6] that is that the primary flow of traffic
 [7] is right up and down St. Claude. If you
 [8] become familiar with the neighborhood west
 [9] of the Industrial Canal, you'll find that
 [10] there are very few stop signs on streets
 [11] parallel to the river, parallel is it to
 [12] St. Claude. As a result, there's major
 [13] secondary traffic flowing from, is it
 [14] Poland Street, is it to Franklin along
 [15] most of the streets that are parallel to
 [16] the river. As such, any disruption that
 [17] you may have along the St. Claude corridor
 [18] is also going to go ahead and have various
 [19] impacts on the associated neighborhoods.
 [20] And as a result, some good, some bad, but
 [21] at the very least a more thorough traffic
 [22] analysis I believe needs to be made in
 [23] those particular areas.
 [24] There are some mitigation
 [25] steps, some of which are fairly

[1] inexpensive. For example, reversing some
[2] of the stop signs to go ahead and have
[3] traffic Ts out into St. Claude as opposed
[4] to allowing for thoroughfare traffic
[5] between the CBD and the Bywater
[6] neighborhood, for example, could be done.
[7] But I believe that because of the fact
[8] that your project will impact St. Claude
[9] to a greater extent, clearly there's going
[10] to be damage, is it to the neighborhoods,
[11] is it west of the Industrial Canal based
[12] upon traffic effects, and I would like to
[13] say as an additional is that street work
[14] be done in terms of analysis, perhaps some
[15] signage and hopefully some additional
[16] resurfacing. Thank you.

[17] COLONEL CONNER:

[18] Thank you, sir.

[19] MR. DICHARRY:

[20] Cynthia Sumner.

[21] MS. SUMNER:

[22] I had hoped not to have
[23] to speak here tonight. It's not something
[24] I'm entirely comfortable with. But seeing
[25] as so many people have had to leave, I

[1] feel that I have to come up here and say
[2] something. I moved to Holy Cross because
[3] it is unlike any other place that I know
[4] of in New Orleans. It is a little piece
[5] of country out here. I look out my window
[6] and I see green grass. You're going to
[7] take that away. Not only do I see green
[8] grass, I see kids playing on it. In an
[9] urban environment like this, like we have
[10] in New Orleans, that is rare for those
[11] children to have that. Would you want
[12] your kids to be robbed of that? Would you
[13] want your children to be breathing the
[14] kind of dust and be exposed to the sorts
[15] of toxic things that are going to be
[16] floating around in the air when this kind
[17] of construction is going on? Do you have
[18] children? Does anybody up there have
[19] children? Okay. Would you want
[20] supertankers and would you want barges
[21] with toxic materials going through your
[22] neighborhood where they could possibly be
[23] exposed to those kinds of things? Would
[24] you want that to happen to you? Think
[25] about the people who live here. Who is it

[1] going to impact? It's quality of life.
[2] It's not just about money. There's no way
[3] that you can replace that. There's no way
[4] that you can compensate for what you're
[5] about to take away.
[6] And, I don't know, I'm
[7] just curious right now with you all who
[8] are left, because I'm thinking time's
[9] running out tonight. Everybody's tired.
[10] We all want to go home. I would like to
[11] hear a round of applause for those people
[12] who are opposed because I think you need
[13] to hear who's left, who's stuck it out to
[14] show you that they don't want this here.
[15] Could I hear that from you all?

[16] (Applause.)

[17] COLONEL CONNER:

[18] Thank you, ma'am.

[19] MR. DICHARRY:

[20] Celestine Walker.

[21] (No response.)

[22] Kenneth Robinson.

[23] (No response.)

[24] Kathy Randells.

[25] (No response.)

[1] Charles Jones.
[2] (No response.)
[3] Mark Brink.
[4] MR. BRINK:
[5] I'm Mark Brink. I
[6] represent Mark's Muffler Shop right up the
[7] street.
[8] This project will have a
[9] direct economic slowdown to my business.
[10] Three-quarters of my business is across
[11] the bridge and in other parishes.
[12] Difficult access to my business will
[13] substantially hurt sales. In the past,
[14] when the Claiborne bridge was broken, my
[15] sales were cut more than half. I have a
[16] 14-year established location. This
[17] project would interrupt my business
[18] terribly. I'm afraid my business, Miss
[19] Moore's business, Holy Cross, we'd have to
[20] get up and leave or go out of business. I
[21] just wanted to state. Thank you.

[22] COLONEL CONNER:

[23] Thank you.

[24] MR. DICHARRY:

[25] James Williams.

[1] (No response.)

[2] Calvin Aguillard.

[3] (No response.)

[4] Danny Lewis.

[5] MR. LEWIS:

[6] Gentlemen, at this point,

[7] it's kind of like winning a lottery when

[8] your name comes up. I am a real estate

[9] agent. I have only one question. That

[10] question is, what will the effects be of

[11] 11 years of work on the canal on real

[12] estate values in the areas near the canal?

[13] A friend of mine who lives very close here

[14] called me and said, "Danny, I've got a

[15] copy of the draft report. I'd like for

[16] you to look it over. It's the real estate

[17] supplement." And I suppose he called me

[18] because I was a real estate agent, not

[19] because I like to read technical reports.

[20] But in any case, many of you may have seen

[21] this, New Lock and Connecting Channel

[22] Draft Elevation Report, Real Estate

[23] Supplement. So what my friend asked me to

[24] do was look over this and dredge through

[25] the figures and see exactly what the Corps

[1] estate in New Orleans. Things are not

[2] booming but we all know oil's pretty good,

[3] the port's pretty good. You can't even go

[4] downtown because of visitors. It's a

[5] fairly good time. The average home owner

[6] or business owner can expect a reasonable

[7] appreciation on his or her property in

[8] this town.

[9] Now, you know, what's

[10] reasonable, two percent, three percent,

[11] five percent a year. That depends on who

[12] you ask. Nobody's got a crystal ball on

[13] this. But the average home owner can

[14] expect an increase in the value of their

[15] property. Well, I think in this case,

[16] with this particular work on the horizon

[17] around the canal, that the average home

[18] owner in Holy Cross and Bywater and St.

[19] Claude and Plaquemine and St. Bernard can

[20] expect a serious report on what the effect

[21] on real estate values will be. And they

[22] don't have that. Thanks.

[23] COLONEL CONNER:

[24] Thank you, sir.

[25] MR. DICHARRY:

[1] said the effect on real estate values

[2] would be of these proposed 11 years of

[3] work.

[4] Well, okay, I got myself

[5] comfortable and I read this from cover to

[6] cover, and there is one thing on Page 15.

[7] It's the first paragraph. It says, "There

[8] are no problems anticipated with the land

[9] owners." "There are no problems

[10] anticipated with the land owners."

[11] Now, it's possible I got

[12] the wrong report. This is a real estate

[13] supplement. Maybe there's another one,

[14] and if there is, naturally I'd like to see

[15] that. And I'm confident the Corps would

[16] make this report available to any of you

[17] that want it. But, you know, if you just

[18] take Holy Cross here, you've got about

[19] 2500 homes in Holy Cross. About 2,000 of

[20] them are occupied; the other 500 are

[21] vacant. Their property is worth millions

[22] of dollars.

[23] Now, I'm not telling you

[24] anything you don't know when I tell you

[25] that it's a fairly good time for real

[1] Nilima Mwendo.

[2] MS. MWENDO:

[3] Good evening. I'm Nilima

[4] Mwendo of the Lower Ninth Ward-Holy Cross

[5] area. The maritime industry, the United

[6] States government and particularly the

[7] Corps of Engineers and the Port of New

[8] Orleans are all going to benefit

[9] tremendously from this project. It's

[10] estimated that it would generate billions

[11] of dollars in increased revenue over a

[12] period of time. The people of the four

[13] communities affected by this project

[14] should also benefit. This is an

[15] opportunity for a win-win situation, yet

[16] the government is offering crumbs in

[17] return for major disruption, upheaval and

[18] inconvenience to the people, to the

[19] families in these communities for at least

[20] 10 to 15 years. There will be various

[21] negative effects, physically,

[22] economically, socially and

[23] psychologically, as a result of this

[24] project.

[25] What is the mitigation

[1] for these? I sat in a few of the
[2] Neighborhood Working Group meetings and
[3] felt that the Port and Corps were there to
[4] fulfill a mandate that said you have to
[5] get the participation of the
[6] neighborhoods, period, not their approval
[7] of the project, not to set up negotiations
[8] or to determine impacts and fair and
[9] proper mitigation but to get
[10] participation.

[11] I can come to a meeting,
[12] say two words, and you can say I have
[13] participated. It did not matter how many
[14] times in how many ways we said we did not
[15] want this project. They kept trying and
[16] got from many the vision for this
[17] community. "Give us your vision," they
[18] continued to say, not that the vision
[19] would be realized but so they could put on
[20] paper and say we participated, end of
[21] story.

[22] This feeling I had
[23] following these few meetings triggered
[24] unpleasant memories of documented
[25] historical facts which the government has

[1] uranium and plutonium without their
[2] knowledge and the U.S. government finally
[3] admitting to its involvement in 1996,
[4] after years of denial; the building of
[5] hundreds of prisons a year to house those
[6] who are and who will be the discarded of
[7] society due to welfare reform, drugs,
[8] cutbacks in education and lack of jobs and
[9] entrepreneurial opportunities.

[10] With such a history, it
[11] is difficult to believe that the
[12] government is for the people, for the good
[13] of the people beyond its own agenda and
[14] gain. Do I add the IHNC project to the
[15] list of examples of the Mississippi
[16] treatment of the common man, woman and
[17] child, the family?

[18] Let me bring it down home
[19] to this situation. In the summer of 1995,
[20] I submitted a written proposal to the Port
[21] and Corps as a suggested mitigation plan.
[22] Its basis was to promote self-sufficiency
[23] and self-determination within the four
[24] communities. The proposal was not
[25] included in the Corps' and the Port's

[1] been involved in, and I said to myself,
[2] here we go again. Representative Sherman
[3] Copeland gave examples of recent unkept
[4] promises. I have a few more dramatic
[5] ones, some that go way back.

[6] For example, we can go
[7] back as far as to nearly the end of
[8] slavery when ex-slaves were promised their
[9] 40 acres and a mule as an economic base
[10] upon which to establish themselves and to
[11] recoup some of the payment for many years
[12] of free labor. As you know, we are still
[13] fighting for our 40 acres and a mule
[14] through the Reparations Movement, repairs
[15] for damages incurred from slavery due to
[16] the exploitation, discrimination and
[17] oppression of African Americans to this
[18] present day.

[19] Other examples, the
[20] syphilis-injected experiments on
[21] prisoners, the conscious small pox spread
[22] to Native Americans, the Jim Crow laws of
[23] the South; more recently, the payment of
[24] 4.8 million dollars to the 12 human guinea
[25] pigs who in the 1940s were injected with

[1] minutes or in any of their mitigation
[2] plans, including this latest one. A
[3] portion of a line was included, totally
[4] out of the proposal's context, saying that
[5] this was one of the suggestions that the
[6] community wanted. Sounds familiar?

[7] Briefly, the proposal was
[8] this. Additional to the direct mitigation
[9] plans that already exist, this would be
[10] the proposal: All vessels that use the
[11] Industrial Canal would pay a fee. By the
[12] way, this is not a new practice. In the
[13] 1920s when the Port owned the locks, each
[14] vessel that used the canal was charged a
[15] fee or a toll. Anyway, a portion of that
[16] fee to go to the City of New Orleans for
[17] the four communities' infrastructure and
[18] the remainder would be divided among the
[19] four communities, with the highest
[20] percentage earmarked for the communities
[21] suffering the greatest impact. Committees
[22] from each community would determine how
[23] the money would be spent in specific
[24] delineated areas in education, economic
[25] development, healthcare, housing, crime

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[1] prevention and recreation. This idea will
[2] allow the communities affected by this
[3] major disruption to become more
[4] self-sufficient and more self-determining.
[5] I believe the proposal I
[6] just briefly outlined would encourage and
[7] maintain the human dignity and respect of
[8] the families in our communities as well as
[9] provide economic growth and development
[10] for the government and the maritime
[11] industry. Again, it could be a win-win
[12] situation. We do not accept the present
[13] mitigation plan delineated in the IHNC
[14] report.

[15] COLONEL CONNER:

[16] Thank you, ma'am.

[17] MR. DICHARRY:

[18] Raymond Ambrose.

[19] (No response.)

[20] I have to apologize. I
[21] don't know the first name here. But it's
[22] "Loubolton." "Loubolton" is the last
[23] name, from living on Flood Street.

[24] (No response.)

[25] Kelly Despoux or Despoux?

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[1] (No response.)

[2] The last name is
[3] M-E-G-I-N, living on Dauphine Street,
[4] Rudolfo Megin?

[5] (No response.)

[6] Erroll Damimi (phonetic)?

[7] (No response.)

[8] I'm sorry, did I - I
[9] must have really butchered that one.

[10] MR. BEAN:

[11] That's quite all right.
[12] I'm not him anyway. My name is Gary Bean
[13] and I'm not a stone's throw away from the
[14] St. Claude. I'm in the ten hundred block.
[15] And to me, this comes down to not just the
[16] community, because to me the community is
[17] one, and each one of us, each and every
[18] one of us, is one when we're looking at
[19] this project that you're trying to thrust
[20] down our throat. And I'm not only going
[21] to be impacted directly. I'm pretty
[22] certain I would be displaced. And my idea
[23] of purchasing a home in the Bywater area
[24] is like many of the people in the
[25] community's, in the old community's, that

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[1] my vision is to live there, enjoy my life,
[2] and also have the opportunity to help
[3] raise my grandchildren and leave them some
[4] form of legacy of mine's.

[5] I would like to know, you
[6] know, because the mitigation money to me
[7] is definitely not enough. You'd have to
[8] give it all to me for me to be satisfied.
[9] But at the same time, what am I going to
[10] gain out of the mitigation? In the ten
[11] hundred block right there on Poland
[12] Avenue, certainly my place will not
[13] remain. Can the Corps of Engineers give
[14] me back my 18 months of labor, not just by
[15] myself, also with my fiancee, that I've
[16] labored in my residence to build it and to
[17] bring it back up, to build that community
[18] back up? The Corps cannot pay me enough
[19] for that. Will the Corps take and move my
[20] home, not just give me money to go and
[21] purchase somewhere else where - and
[22] incidentally, I may be displacing someone
[23] again, too. Will the Corps take and
[24] remove my home, period? That mean brick
[25] for brick, board for board, tile for tile,

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[1] and put it in a place of my choosing,
[2] because if the Corps cannot do that for
[3] me, then the Corps is not doing any good
[4] for me nor is the Corps doing any good for
[5] the community. If I have to leave the
[6] community, the community little by little
[7] just starts to die off. It'll be gone.
[8] The legacy of the Historic District, it'll
[9] disappear. What's next?

[10] And this is a big problem
[11] with big government. It's always what's
[12] next. You are not beyond the people. The
[13] people is the government, or should I say
[14] the people are the government. When are
[15] you all going to listen to us? I didn't
[16] purchase in the Bywater for this project
[17] to come to me and say, well, you was able
[18] to obtain a piece of your goal but you
[19] must go. I'm not interested in going.
[20] That is the reason that I purchased there.
[21] I want to live a fruitful life in that
[22] area, in that community, with the
[23] neighbors. I haven't been in there long
[24] enough to learn my neighbors. I want that
[25] opportunity to do that.

[1] I'll go on record, I
[2] vehemently oppose this project. And I
[3] also want to know an answer, does the
[4] Corps intend on pushing this down
[5] everyone's throat? I want a direct
[6] answer. Will you remove my home in total
[7] the way it is?
[8] If I wanted to live
[9] somewhere else where I can purchase a home
[10] that would not be affected by this, I
[11] would have done so. I purchased where I
[12] purchased because this is where I want to
[13] live, because the ambience of my home, the
[14] mitigation money will never replace that,
[15] not today, not tomorrow, not next year.
[16] And I don't want to be putting up with, as
[17] you say, an average of two years in each
[18] area. I don't think I'm going to have to
[19] put up with it two years. If I want
[20] soundproofing in my home, eventually at
[21] some point in time I can do that to
[22] myself. I want air conditioning? I can
[23] do that myself. I don't need the Corps to
[24] do that for me. What I need the Corps to
[25] do is to leave my home intact the way it

[1] is and where I can be in peace and
[2] continue raising my life out where I am
[3] and to help raise my grandchildren. And
[4] no shaking of any heads or just looking
[5] and staring because I know all of those
[6] things is going to make me feel any
[7] better. What I want is the project to go
[8] away, period. Thank you.
[9] COLONEL CONNER:
[10] Sir, we didn't get your
[11] last name. Could you give that to us,
[12] please?
[13] MR. BEAN:
[14] Yes, sir. It's Bean,
[15] B-E-A-N.
[16] COLONEL CONNER:
[17] Thank you.
[18] MR. DICHARRY:
[19] David Bradshaw.
[20] (No response.)
[21] Koto Livingston.
[22] (No response.)
[23] Larry Spencer.
[24] MR. SPENCER:
[25] Thanks anyway but I was

[1] going to wait if it was till midnight.
[2] You understand what I'm saying? All I
[3] want to say is, as I've been saying since
[4] day one of this project, we started this
[5] thing about four or five years ago, this
[6] recent project, and at that point, I think
[7] it was Congresswoman Boggs who said the
[8] project will not go forward - there was a
[9] meeting at the Holy Cross Neighborhood
[10] Association - until such time as all
[11] parties come to an agreement as to if and
[12] what they want. Do they want a project,
[13] do they not want a project. We went
[14] through the whole - we had the usuals.
[15] We had the industry. We had the Corps.
[16] We had the Port. We had the neighborhood
[17] associations. And everybody that wanted
[18] to participate participated.
[19] Since that first initial
[20] meeting, everyone from the businesses in
[21] the community, the neighborhood
[22] associations, the churches, the general
[23] everyday citizen, has been saying no.
[24] Tonight, I got here when you all started
[25] and every speaker, political, business

[1] association, just Joe Blow citizen that
[2] has walked up to this mike, has said no.
[3] The only folk I have seen come up here and
[4] said yes was the barge industry and all
[5] the people who's going to be using this
[6] facility grossing about a million dollars
[7] a day of the fruits of our suffering,
[8] because that's what you're going to have.
[9] Okay? What you will have here, and let's
[10] not play games about the economy and all
[11] the good things it's going to do for New
[12] Orleans, because what it's going to do for
[13] New Orleans is minimal. It's minimal
[14] because what's going to come through that
[15] lock is going to go Memphis, Tennessee,
[16] Baton Rouge or wherever up the Mississippi
[17] they need to go. It's a short route for
[18] container ships. And for jobs? The
[19] industry as it is right now will handle
[20] whatever's coming through those locks
[21] without any infusion of jobs.
[22] Be real about it. Let's
[23] take the mirrors, you know, and turn them
[24] backwards, put the fan on and blow the
[25] smoke out the room. Okay? The

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(1) realization is, the economic impact on
 (2) this city will be a drop in the bucket to
 (3) the economic impact of the one major
 (4) special interest group in this country
 (5) that's one of the biggest in the world,
 (6) and also the shipping industry.
 (7) Now, you want to come
 (8) here and throw sand and peanuts at me and
 (9) say 33 million dollars. I'm not going to
 (10) rehash the points that was made whereas
 (11) half of this mediation plan is actually a
 (12) part of the operation plan, but we're
 (13) going to dispense with that. We're not
 (14) going to go there. It's been there.
 (15) We've been there. When you go to Congress
 (16) and present this wonderful package of
 (17) yours, these folk, if they agree to it,
 (18) there is nothing in that mitigation plan
 (19) that you could promise me going to happen
 (20) to my community because if you go to
 (21) Congress with my blessing and Congress
 (22) say, well, let's do the project, we don't
 (23) have to do mediation. Everybody in here
 (24) talking about losing your job and all
 (25) this, all that's going down the tubes.

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(1) You don't have a penny. You cannot put a
 (2) dime in no bank for no mediation. Okay?
 (3) You want to sell us something? You want
 (4) to be real with us?
 (5) If, and I'm totally
 (6) distanced by that, but if it should
 (7) happen, here's the mediation plan I have
 (8) in plan. You go to the folk who are going
 (9) to make the money, the shipping industry,
 (10) tell them to put a billion dollars in an
 (11) account and sit it on that table and say,
 (12) here's your mediation plan, four
 (13) communities, do what you want with it and
 (14) have your community. But this whole
 (15) mediation thing is just like them folks
 (16) with "Mr. No" got caught, it's smoke. You
 (17) cannot tell me you're going to air
 (18) condition nobody's house or do nothing in
 (19) nobody's house because you don't have a
 (20) dime to do it and if Congress don't give
 (21) it to you, you can't do it. So don't sit
 (22) here and tell me about all the things
 (23) you're going to do for these folks when
 (24) you ain't got a dime to back it up with.
 (25) In one year's period, the

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(1) shipping industry is going to make 365
 (2) million dollars when this thing is
 (3) completed, a year. You multiply that by
 (4) ten years and look at the economic impact
 (5) they're going to have. They want this
 (6) thing and you, being Mr. Good Guy and
 (7) wanting everything to run smoothly and do
 (8) good for the industry, okay, you tell the
 (9) industry, they come down here, not the
 (10) Corps, not the Port, the industry, the
 (11) shipping magnets, the Onassis clans and
 (12) the Sea/Lands and the Puerto Rican marinas
 (13) and all of these folks that are making
 (14) these billions and trillions of dollars.
 (15) Tell them to come down here and put some
 (16) money on the table, straight-up hard cash
 (17) money if you want to talk about doing
 (18) something in this community. And then I'm
 (19) still opposed to it, but be real and don't
 (20) sell these people a mediation plan where
 (21) you don't have a penny to back it up with
 (22) and ain't got no guarantee you're going to
 (23) get a penny. Let's be real.
 (24) I know you saved me till
 (25) last so everybody's gone and don't hear

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(1) this, but I want my comments put in your
 (2) plan verbatim. Thank you.
 (3) COLONEL CONNER:
 (4) Thank you.
 (5) MR. DICHARRY:
 (6) Phil Arnolds.
 (7) (No response.)
 (8) The remaining cards that
 (9) I have here have question marks whether
 (10) they want to make statements or not.
 (11) Instead of reading all of these names out,
 (12) unless you want me to, sir, they didn't
 (13) know for sure if they wanted to make
 (14) statements or not.
 (15) Denise Pruitt?
 (16) (No response.)
 (17) Robert E. Jackson?
 (18) (No response.)
 (19) Do you want to continue
 (20) to read them or - Okay. Noreen Scott?
 (21) (No response.)
 (22) Alberta Graf? Eddie -
 (23) oh, I'm sorry. Alberta?
 (24) Ms. GRAF:
 (25) Yes. My name is Alberta

[1] Graf. For those older residents from this
[2] area, I'm Alberta Grun Retif Graf. "Grun"
[3] won't mean very much to you gentlemen. My
[4] grandfather was William Grun, and in the
[5] early 1900s, he set up a pharmacy on
[6] Dauphine Street on the corner of Flood and
[7] Dauphine. It was his entrance into his
[8] career as a pharmacist. And then the
[9] Corps of Engineers announced the
[10] possibility of a canal being put through.
[11] I didn't come prepared to
[12] speak. I came prepared to support the
[13] Bywater Association, of which I am a
[14] member of the board of directors. And my
[15] interest of course has always been with
[16] Holy Cross but I just didn't participate
[17] in that group because I've been out of
[18] town for a while.
[19] I decided to speak
[20] because this is deja vu again. My
[21] grandfather was one of the ones that said
[22] no to the Corps, but the Corps put the
[23] canal there anyway. He was displaced, his
[24] business, from Dauphine Street to St.
[25] Claude Avenue. And in the course of 50 or

[1] the last 25 years, I heard and was told
[2] and then saw of a gradual disintegration
[3] of neighborhoods that had been a very
[4] viable part of New Orleans, creating a
[5] pocket which many people here have
[6] described already. I, too, rode the
[7] streetcar over the Industrial Canal bridge
[8] when there was one going to Tulane
[9] University. I have returned after being
[10] away from the city for about 15 years.
[11] I've been here in the last five. And I
[12] have seen sad, sad disintegration brought
[13] about by actions of the Corps of Engineers
[14] to an historic area with much rich
[15] heritage. And so I had to speak to ask
[16] you gentlemen and those that you
[17] represent.
[18] In 1923, there was
[19] mitigation to the people then, too, and
[20] part of the mitigation was a huge party
[21] thrown on a barge going through the canal.
[22] And my mother was at the head of that
[23] barge as a young woman and she lived to
[24] tell many years the story of the
[25] excitement of that barge. But was that

[1] mitigation to compensate for the
[2] disintegration of a neighborhood which has
[3] gradually deteriorated? The lady who has
[4] the business on St. Claude, it's going to
[5] go. The people who have mentioned all the
[6] other things that might happen to the
[7] neighborhood and described to you the
[8] poverty in this neighborhood, your
[9] organization created that. You made a
[10] handicapped neighborhood. You brought
[11] this neighborhood a handicap. Do you
[12] really want to be part of a group now that
[13] not only continues the handicap but makes
[14] it a quadriplegic? Do you really want to
[15] do that?
[16] And I ask you, sir, isn't
[17] this a done deal anyway? If it isn't, why
[18] were the politicians, the political people
[19] and the major maritime interests allowed
[20] to speak before the people had time to do
[21] their say? They have had to leave. They
[22] have businesses and careers and
[23] professions and jobs and work to run to
[24] tomorrow. They had to leave. And so I
[25] ask you again, are you going to make this

[1] a quadriplegic area? If you are, why not
[2] just take the whole community and tell us
[3] now. Thank you.
[4] COLONEL CONNER:
[5] Thank you.
[6] MR. DICHARRY:
[7] Eddie Latte (phonetic)?
[8] (No response.)
[9] Gilbert, Gilbrecht Coker?
[10] (No response.)
[11] Mark Gonzales?
[12] (No response.)
[13] Mary Patsy Story.
[14] (No response.)
[15] That's all the cards.
[16] Does anybody else have anything to say or
[17] want to -
[18] COLONEL CONNER:
[19] Give us your full name,
[20] please.
[21] MS. STANLEY:
[22] I'm Evelyn Stanley. I
[23] live at 723 Caffin Avenue. I've been a
[24] resident in this neighborhood for 70 years
[25] in the same house. I would just like to

(1) offer this man this real estate card so
(2) that when he comes to move to New Orleans,
(3) we can find him a house down here so he
(4) can enjoy with us all the problems that
(5) we're going to go through.

(6) COLONEL CONNER:

(7) Thank you, ma'am. Do we
(8) have other folks in the audience who would
(9) like to address the group?

(10) MR. CHANDLER:

(11) My name's Chris Chandler
(12) and I'd like to congratulate the Colonel
(13) and anyone else in the room that was
(14) involved in the production of the video.
(15) I think that it was one of the finest
(16) pieces of propaganda that this army or any
(17) other army has ever produced. And I'd
(18) also like to say that if the U.S. Army
(19) Corps of Engineers is about protecting big
(20) business, then you are doing a great job.
(21) But I personally feel that the United
(22) States of America is about a much higher
(23) ideal about protecting the lives of
(24) everyday people. And so, therefore, I'd
(25) like to recommend that if this video is

(1) know say that if anything goes down here,
(2) like if the bridges are moved or anything,
(3) that they will move out. And I know for
(4) sure that 90 percent of the people that I
(5) know that rent, anyone who can afford to,
(6) will leave and live somewhere else and
(7) that will leave most of the community
(8) empty because there's a lot of rental
(9) units here. And if people move out, then
(10) the few of us who can't go anywhere else
(11) will be stuck here with 90 percent
(12) abandoned houses, and we all know what
(13) happens when that's like. It's like the
(14) crime will skyrocket and I'll be afraid to
(15) go home or to leave my home.

(16) And also, about the
(17) bridge, and a lot of people have talked
(18) about putting in higher bridges and
(19) everything, and I also know that most of
(20) the people I know are very poor and they
(21) have bicycles or they walk and there's no
(22) way to walk or bicycle across the
(23) mid-range bridges and there's no proposal
(24) for people with bikes to go, like if they
(25) took out the bridge, to be able to get

(1) used in the United States Congress to
(2) pitch this project, that I would like to
(3) recommend that whoever was involved in the
(4) production of it go on trial for lying to
(5) Congress. Thanks.

(6) COLONEL CONNER:

(7) Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

(8) MS. CRUZ:

(9) My name's Kathleen Cruz
(10) and I live on the end of Jourdan Avenue at
(11) the river and I'm here because I'm afraid.
(12) I came to this neighborhood only like a
(13) year and a half ago, and the minute I
(14) moved here, I already met neighbors five
(15) blocks away. And most neighborhoods and
(16) cities, you barely know the person beside
(17) you except to nod. And I've never felt a
(18) sense of community anywhere except for way
(19) out in the country that we have here. And
(20) I think it's really important to have like
(21) neighbors and friends, and that's what
(22) makes you safe in a city is to know the
(23) people around you.

(24) And I've had several of
(25) the people who are the neighbors that I

(1) across the canal. And you can't just, you
(2) know, take the bus and then walk if you're
(3) used to your - people that go all the way
(4) Uptown on their bicycles like twice a day.
(5) I mean, it sounds crazy to those of us
(6) with cars, but a lot of people survive by
(7) their bicycle. And there's, you know, no
(8) way for them to be able to get across the
(9) bridge.

(10) And also I wanted to, I
(11) was going to say again about the levee
(12) being grass and just how like there's a
(13) sense of peace here and it's, you know,
(14) again, a very special thing for a city to
(15) have peace. And people bring their kids,
(16) they drive their kids from other parts of
(17) the city to come to our small section of
(18) the levee that has the grass so they can
(19) fish. They show them the boats. And all
(20) different kinds of people come. It's not
(21) just one group. It's not just the people
(22) who live right there. People drive their
(23) kids over to play like in front of my
(24) house. And it's a beautiful thing and it
(25) helps keep the neighborhood safe and it

(1) makes me want to live here. And I just
(2) bought a house this year after living in
(3) this neighborhood only for less than a
(4) year. I purchased a home here because I
(5) loved it so much. Thank you.

(6) COLONEL CONNER:

(7) We didn't get your last
(8) name. Could we get that, please?

(9) Cruz?

(10) Other speakers?

(11) MS. RICE:

(12) Good evening. My name is
(13) Julianna Christiani Rice and I live in the
(14) Holy Cross Neighborhood Association. And
(15) one of my main concerns is, when the
(16) bridge is out, I can remember when the
(17) Claiborne bridge was down a couple of
(18) years ago, I was walking in different
(19) areas in the morning just trying to get to
(20) work. We don't have big executives in
(21) this community like other areas. We have
(22) poor people trying to raise their
(23) families. I could have made a deal with
(24) my boss so that I can go in later and work
(25) later. There's a lot of people down here

(1) merchant seaman, he does work on a ship.
(2) I don't want them in my neighborhood.
(3) And that's all I have to
(4) say. But I'm just thinking about the poor
(5) people who will have to go because there
(6) were mornings when I was walking from home
(7) across the bridge to get, trying to get to
(8) work, and not a lot of people would be
(9) able to say, well, I can tell my boss,
(10) well, I'm come in at 9:00 and I'll work
(11) until 6:00 in the afternoon. A lot of
(12) people can't do that. They don't have
(13) that option. It's either you get here on
(14) time or go. So that's all I have to say.
(15) Thank you.

(16) COLONEL CONNER:

(17) Thank you.
(18) Anyone else care to speak
(19) tonight? Yes, ma'am?

(20) MS. GRAF:

(21) I think we've talked a
(22) lot about what could happen and most of
(23) it, all of it, has been negative except
(24) for the maritime interests. I just wanted
(25) to say that this was a neighborhood that

(1) who can't do that. And I know
(2) subsequently lots of people probably will
(3) lose their jobs, their little \$4.75-an-
(4) hour job. What is going to happen with
(5) those people?

(6) My other concern is, I
(7) have a few pieces of property in this
(8) area. When the construction goes and my
(9) tenants decide to go, who is going to
(10) reimburse me when I - loss of income? I
(11) would like to know that, because I don't
(12) want a handout from anybody. I'm a
(13) foreigner and I come here and I work hard.
(14) I don't want you to do anything for me.
(15) Just give me the opportunity. And all I'm
(16) saying, this is a wonderful neighborhood
(17) since I live - I lived in New York and I
(18) moved down here 13, 14 years ago. I lived
(19) on the same street. I have four or five
(20) pieces of property on the same street. I
(21) want you to take your project and shove it
(22) somewhere else. We don't want it here. I
(23) don't want to inhale the toxic stuff that
(24) is going to be coming down with those
(25) tankers. My husband does work, is

(1) had a quality of life to it. Many of the
(2) people, the last young lady that spoke of
(3) the quality of life on the levee, I was
(4) blessed to grow up with that in spite of
(5) the Industrial Canal bridge. My mother
(6) had grown up with more of that because she
(7) could get on the streetcar at Dauphine and
(8) Flood and go all the way up to Canal
(9) Street and the Central Business District
(10) on Dauphine Street because there was no
(11) canal.

(12) I think the only thing
(13) that the Corps really needs to think about
(14) is, if you do have to go through with such
(15) a project and it does have to be in this
(16) four-district community or four historic
(17) neighborhood area, can you really return
(18) the quality of life that existed here?
(19) Can you really return that? I don't think
(20) you can, putting in that kind of a
(21) project. And I think that's important to
(22) every one of these people that are are
(23) here still yet tonight and that have been
(24) here this evening. It's quality of life
(25) we're talking about. On one side of the

[1] ledger, and it's maritime, monetary
[2] interests on the other side of the ledger.
[3] And I'll leave you with a
[4] question again. Which would you be proud
[5] to go saying that you had achieved? Thank
[6] you.

COLONEL CONNER:

[7] Thank you, Mrs. Graf.
[8] Senator?

SENATOR JOHNSON:

[11] Colonel, let me - I know
[12] we're about to close down. I just want to
[13] try and close down tonight by saying
[14] something. You've heard an awful lot from
[15] Holy Cross and Bywater, but I certainly
[16] want the record to reflect that it is not
[17] just those two neighborhoods that are
[18] adamantly opposed to this project. The
[19] neighborhoods over on the other side of
[20] St. Claude, on the other side of Claiborne
[21] Avenue, you frankly didn't hear an awful
[22] lot from those neighborhoods on tonight.

[23] But those of us, and
[24] there are a couple or three people who
[25] came up and said something about elected

[1] Bywater, you heard an awful lot from Holy
[2] Cross, and you didn't hear an awful lot or
[3] that much from the other communities.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

[5] I just wanted to say one³¹
[6] thing that Representative Copeland, he
[7] really opposed it. Now, he's our
[8] representative for the other side of St.
[9] Claude all the way to Florida. I spoke
[10] with him the other day. And he and the
[11] other group of people does not want this
[12] project to go through.

COLONEL CONNER:

[14] Yes, ma'am. Thank you.
[15] Senator?

SENATOR DEAN:

[17] I wish you had let us
[18] speak last. I would like the record to
[19] show I'm still here. I've had an awful.
[20] I've learned a lot. Thank you.

COLONEL CONNER:

[22] Thank you, sir. Other
[23] comments? Yes, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

[25] I would like to say one

[1] officials speaking first and it's a done
[2] deal. You know, I want the record to
[3] clearly reflect where all of us are as
[4] elected officials that I know of,
[5] including the Mayor of the City of New
[6] Orleans. I'm not attempting to speak for
[7] the Mayor but I have spoken to him. There
[8] is no question about where we stand on
[9] this issue. And I want to make it
[10] perfectly clear, perfectly clear, because
[11] I don't want the record to reflect
[12] anything that is not the case. Every
[13] elected official I know who represents the
[14] people in this district, every elected
[15] official I know that represents the people
[16] in this district, is opposed to this
[17] project, is adamantly opposed to it. The
[18] people who live on the other side of St.
[19] Claude, the people who live on the other
[20] side of Claiborne Avenue, I live on the
[21] other side of Claiborne Avenue. I live at
[22] 2223 Deslondre Street. Those people are
[23] adamantly opposed to this project. And I
[24] just want the record to clearly reflect
[25] that because you heard an awful lot from

[1] more thing. Have you thought about what
[2] this project is going to do to your
[3] reputation as the Corps of Engineers if
[4] it's a very unpopular project which you
[5] try to push through in spite of the will
[6] of the people here? Have you thought also
[7] of the project cost, how increased it
[8] might be if 50,000 people don't want it?
[9] What a struggle that will be, as project
[10] cost.

COLONEL CONNER:

[12] I want to thank you all
[13] for coming tonight and especially for
[14] those of you that stuck it out till the
[15] bitter end here. My hat's off to you for
[16] that. I truly appreciate your comments.
[17] I learned a lot this evening and I
[18] guarantee that I will take each and every
[19] one of your comments to heart as I review
[20] this project. And I remind you that the
[21] public review period is not over, and if
[22] you have additional people that you know
[23] that didn't have the opportunity to be
[24] here this evening or if you yourselves
[25] have additional thoughts, you still have

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(1) until the 24th of February to get that
(2) information to me. So I encourage you to
(3) exercise that avenue.

(4) Being no further comments
(5) from the floor, I call this meeting
(6) adjourned.

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(1) REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

(2)
(3) I, LAURIE J. CHEFFY, a Certified
(4) Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that
(5) audiotapes of the foregoing proceedings
(6) were transcribed under my supervision and
(7) that the foregoing pages contain a true
(8) and correct transcription of said
(9) proceedings, to the best of my ability and
(10) understanding.

(11) I further certify that I am not
(12) related to any of the parties to this
(13) cause, nor in the employ of any of them,
(14) and that I am in no way interested in the
(15) result of said cause.

(16)
(17)

(18) LAURIE J. CHEFFY, RPR-CM
(19) CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

(20)
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