

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Region III Files

DATE: October 23, 1962

FROM : John A. Finn
Radiation SpecialistSUBJECT: TELEPHONE CALL FROM WHEATON DAILY JOURNAL REGARDING AMERICAN POTASH
(LINDSAY CHEMICAL CO.)

At approximately 10:30 AM, October 23, 1962, Joyce Berkman (phone MO 8-4110) called to relay a complaint made at a recent West Chicago Council meeting against Lindsay Chemical Co. She said that she had talked to Baldwin (COO Public Information Officer) and had been referred to Don Gardiner who referred her to us.

She would not reveal the name of the complainant but said she represented the Wheaton Daily Journal and was following up on the story. The complaint was not specific; something about people should be shielded from the plant and about poisoning the DuPage River where children fished and played. She also said she didn't want to pry into secret information.

Finn told her that there was nothing secret in the plant; that ~~the~~ ores were processed to obtain thorium and rare earths; that this is done under a license issued by the AEC. To comply with the license Lindsay has to meet certain limits regarding radioactive material and radiation and must make surveys to assure their compliance. Finn said that Lindsay was inspected periodically and that an inspection made earlier this year had shown nothing of hazard to the public. Finn assured her that this material was not the same as a bomb. Miss Berkman asked if there are many other plants like Lindsay in the Chicago Area. Finn said that there are not other thorium plants but there are many facilities using radioactive materials under AEC license. *plants*

Finn also suggested that Lindsay be contacted. Miss Berkman said she would do that before she wrote a story. She said also that she was going to take a Geiger counter down there and check around.

Finn told her that in view of the general complaint we would not be checking further, but, if she found any specific indication of high radiation, to contact the AEC and we would want to investigate further.

Finn informed Miss Berkman that, in addition to the AEC, the Illinois Dept. of Public Health made inspections of Lindsay's operations. She said she would check with them.

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COMPLAINT ABOUT THEM

On October 23, 1962, about 1:30 PM, Finn called Dr. R. M. Healy, RSO, Lindsay Chemical, West Chicago, to inform him that Joyce Berkman of the Wheaton Daily Journal had called our office to get information about a crank complaint against Lindsay. Finn told Healy that Miss Berkman may possibly contact him regarding the complaint. Finn said that we didn't plan any follow-up since the complaint was apparently of a crank type and did not give specific information as to how Lindsay was a hazard to the public.