



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY  
DUPAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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Mr. Kenneth Carr  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Carr:

As you are aware, the Kerr-McGee Chemical Company recently announced its intention to remove, relocate and rebury nearly 600,000 tons of radioactive thorium waste at its former West Chicago, Illinois site. Currently, this material is spread about throughout West Chicago, and other locations in DuPage County.

There has been much debate recently on the question of whether the N.R.C. ignored governmental environmental standards in granting Kerr-McGee its permit last February 23. There is specific concern over the threat to the health of thousands of persons, including hundreds of schoolchildren who will be exposed to potential hazards not yet fully known.

This office objects to the N.R.C.'s allowing Kerr-McGee to relocate thousands of tons of radioactive material on a site which has been described as a burial mound, 40 feet high. It serves no interests except Kerr McGee's to permit such a plan when safer alternatives are available. We believe the public is best served if your agency reexamines its position with regard to this plan and enjoins any relocation activity at West Chicago while such reconsideration is being done.

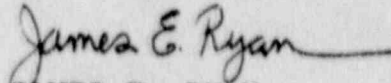
We also understand from a recent article in the Chicago Tribune that your Agency has had an application pending before it from the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety. This application seeks to transfer regulatory authority to the I.D.N.S. and has been awaiting some action for over a year. We believe it is imperative that your agency approve such transfer immediately so that this issue can be handled on a local basis by an interested and involved State Agency, the I.D.N.S.

The history of this problem requires your Agency to act with the greatest caution and care on behalf of the public. The

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permit approved last month does not safeguard the public and should be immediately withdrawn pending further analysis by the N.R.C. and the Environmental Protection Agency. In the alternative, the permit should be withdrawn and jurisdiction of the matter turned over to the I.D.N.S.

Very truly yours,



JAMES E. RYAN  
State's Attorney  
DuPage County, Illinois

JER:rp  
cc: Mayor Paul Netzel  
City of West Chicago  
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