

UNION CARBIDE AND CARBON CORPORATION

30 East Forty-second Street
New York 17, N. Y.

May 19, 1955

Mr. Manfred Bowditch
Lead Industries Association
420 Lexington Avenue
New York 17, New York

My dear Manfred:

Yours of May sixteenth received enclosing a copy of the letter from Brian Taylor of The Broken Hill Associated Smelters Proprietary Limited. This I read with considerable interest. I must confess that I am completely at a loss to understand why the Australian Federation of Organizations of the Blind is seeking to prevent the manufacture of paint with more than 5 per cent soluble lead content on the basis that paint containing more than this percentage of lead could cause total blindness, etc.

I followed the lead situation quite closely for some decades and for many years was actively engaged in medical work with lead handling industries. Assuredly, optic neuritis or blindness due to lead exposures is very rare. When these conditions do occur it is usually in the case of children or women and involves a massive exposure to lead. As far as I can recall, such conditions have never come up in connection with the use of lead paints, excepting possibly in some rare instances where children may have ingested large quantities of lead containing paint. I cannot understand how lead paint containing more than 5 per cent soluble lead in any of its usual applications could cause total blindness, unless this paint were liberally ingested, which is something I do not believe would be at all likely to occur.

I cannot understand how the suggested prohibition of the manufacture of paint with more than 5 per cent of soluble lead content could have any appreciable effect whatsoever in prevention of blindness.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Girard Cranch

MEDICAL CONSULTANT

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