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LEAD INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

Graybar Building, 420 Lexington Avenue
New York, N. Y.

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Bulletin No. 18

White Lead Regulations in the Netherlands

To Members Supporting the White Lead Promotion Program:

In the February 12, 1940 issue of the "American Paint Journal" the following item appeared:

"WHITE LEAD REGULATIONS ENFORCED IN NETHERLANDS

"Washington, Feb. 8.—According to the Chemical Division, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, the use of white lead in painting was prohibited several years ago in the Netherlands and orders recently issued by the Government provided for the enforcement of certain sections of the Industrial Health and Safety Act of July 2, 1934, which prohibits the use of white lead in painting.

"Section 13 of this Act prohibits the use of white lead, sulfate of lead, and other lead pigments in not only the interior paint of buildings, but also, with certain exceptions, in the painting of vehicles."

Upon investigation we find that this item is in error. We are advised by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, through the Chief of the European Section, Division of Foreign Tariffs, that the Government of the Netherlands has become a signatory to the Draft Convention Concerning the Use of White Lead in Painting which was adopted by the International Labour Conference of the League of Nations in 1921. Ratification of the Convention does not prohibit the use of white lead for exterior painting in the Netherlands but merely restricts its use as follows:

Article 1.

"Each Member of the International Labour Organization ratifying the present Convention undertakes to prohibit, with the exceptions provided for in Article 2, the use of white lead and sulphate of lead and of all products containing these pigments, in the internal painting of buildings, except where the use of white lead or sulphate of lead or products containing these pigments is

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"considered necessary for railway stations or industrial establishments by the competent authority after consultation with the employers' and workers' organisations concerned.

"It shall nevertheless be permissible to use white pigments containing a maximum of 2 per cent, of lead expressed in terms of metallic lead."

Article 2.

"The provisions of Article 1 shall not apply to artistic painting or fine lining."

We are writing both the American Paint Journal and the Chemical Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce so that no future misleading impression that the Netherlands completely prohibits the use of white lead will appear through those agencies.

Incidentally, it is of interest to reflect on the great amount of information that has been acquired about lead toxicology since the International Labour Conference meetings in the early '20's, after the World War. The information we have obtained in recent years is of a definitely reassuring character. It seems a great pity that some other conference cannot be called to undo some of the injury done white lead by the International Labour Conference in 1921, based upon the meagre medical information about lead available at that time.

Very truly yours,

H Worms

Secretary.