

March 27, 1941

MEMORANDUM ON PAN AMERICAN CASES, MIAMI

Advice obtained from Oscar Lewis and George Rossert indicates that ten or more men employed at the Pan American Airways repair shop at Miami have been complaining of symptoms for the past two months, particularly when working on gasoline tanks removed from planes. Their complaint has been myalgia, headache, dyspnoea, arthralgia, conjunctivitis, and malaise. Sneezing has been frequent and annoying.

It has been noted in the past two months since the use of a gasoline containing lecithin as an inhibitor with high alkylated content the amount deposited in drums, tanks, and storage tanks has greatly increased. The removal of these deposits and the handling of filter paper, chamois, and the like through which gasoline is filtered is always productive of sneezing. A sample of sweepings from the tank repair room, and including these deposits of gasoline, were sent to New York for analysis. The results indicated that the material contained 59% lead. No partition of inorganic and organic lead was made. On March 26, 1941, the employees were sent to Dr. B. E. Bell, (Telephone Miami 4-1611) who examined them and is waiting to hear from us.

The large amount of deposits from gasoline and the illness of sneezing all related to a change in the gasoline shipped from the Texaco refinery at Port Arthur, this change having been made several months ago. Recently, the gasoline has again been changed back to its original characteristic and U.O.P. 4 substituted for lecithin as

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an inhibitor. However, large amounts of the old gasoline which may be causing the trouble are still widely distributed throughout the Pan American Airways Systems and may not all be used for a year or eighteen months.

Dr. Kitzmiller was due in Miami on March 28, 1941, and he was advised by telegram to communicate with Rothert and investigate the situation.

Dr. Willard Machle

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