

July 23, 1953

Dr. Norman W. Karr
Director, Chemical Research
Riker Laboratories, Inc.
P. O. Box 3157 Terminal Annex
Los Angeles 54, California

Dear Doctor Karr:

I regret very much to have to tell you, even after this long delay in replying to your letter of June 4, that we have not been able, as yet, to obtain the information on the cases of tetraethyl lead poisoning treated by Dr. Kitsmiller in Panama. The reports have been promised repeatedly but they have not been delivered.

I am sure that you know that the supply of calcium disodium EDTA which your people tried to get to Dr. Kitsmiller at my request, was not received by him while he was in Panama, and therefore he had only a small quantity which he took with him from the Laboratory. We should have adequate information on how the supply which you furnished was used when it did arrive, but we haven't it yet. This fact merely illustrates the frustrations that confront the experimental observer when he attempts to work outside of his own field of complete control. I suspect, therefore, that the most we shall learn from this experience is that this agent was well tolerated by very sick men, and that there was some excretory response (increases in urinary lead concentration) to its administration. We shall improve on this as much as we can with details, when we can. We shall do so eventually, if one of us has to return to Panama to get the case records. We carried out scores of analyses, and I don't intend to lose their value entirely.

On the other hand, I am much more interested in being able to make some observations of a more detailed type in cases of inorganic lead poisoning, than I am in the Panama results, since at best the latter cannot tell us much about the things I most wish to know - that is, (1) whether or not the administration of the product induces significant clinical improvement in inorganic lead poisoning, (which has not been proved by the reports which I have seen as yet), and (2) what change occurs in the distribution of lead in the body, following its administration. At last we have overcome the hurdle which developed here in the use of the product in the treatment of children. This is the point at which a good

KE 0008630

N9773