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WASHINGTON, July 5—The Administration has asked for \$2-million to attack the problem of lead poisoning of children, but critics contend that the sum is far too little to make an impact on a health hazard that may endanger as many as 400,000 children.

The sum is less than New York City alone spends to help control lead, which is primarily a hazard for young children in urban slums who eat chips of lead-based paint that flakes off the walls and woodwork of old apartments and houses.

No one knows why some children eat the paint chips, but they do, particularly during the summer. A few small chips a day, over a period of a few months, can cause permanent brain damage or death.

Among the most vocal opponents of the Administration's policy on lead poisoning is Representative William F. Ryan, Democrat of Manhattan. He has criticized the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for its failure to ask for any money for the fiscal year 1971. He has also assailed the department for limiting its request for the fiscal year 1972 to \$2-million.

Mr. Ryan was the principal author of a bill signed into law by President Nixon last January that authorized \$25-million to help curb lead poisoning in the next fiscal year.

The Administration has asked for an appropriation of only \$2-million of these funds, noting that, with other money already requested, this would bring the total effort to a level of about \$2.2-million.

Mr. Ryan called this amount "an affront" and said it costs \$5.6-million a year to care for the several thousand children who suffer moderate to severe damage from lead poisoning.

He said that about 200 children died each year from lead poisoning, while 800 others suffered such severe brain damage that they must be cared for in institutions for the rest of their lives, at an annual cost of \$3.2 million.

In testimony before a House Appropriations subcommittee recently, Dr. Edmund O. Rothchild of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center called the Administration request "obscene" and an "act of murder by neglect."

Other specialists have maintained that the amount of money requested by the Department of Health, Education

and Welfare would not have much effect on the problem, which probably exists to some degree in every major American city. Most communities have no organized programs to deal with the lead poisoning.

In New York City, which has one of the best of the few programs that do exist, Dr. Vincent Guineo, director of the city Health Department's Bureau of Lead Poisoning, said his program could easily use an extra \$2-million.

Others Doubtful, Too

The city now spends about \$2.2-million just for case-finding and inspection, Dr. Guineo said.

Specialists in other cities also expressed doubts that \$2-million Federal program would go very far in helping solve the problem.

FDA Petitioned To Ban Sale of Leaded Paint

Funds for Victims Of Lead Poisoning Asked of Senators

WASHINGTON, July 13 (AP)

A Senate panel was told today that the Nixon Administration had rejected a recommendation of Government health specialists for a national push this year against childhood lead poisoning.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Representative William F. Ryan, Democrat of New York, urged the Senate Appropriations subcommittee to include the full \$25-million authorized by Congress to combat lead poisoning rather than the \$2-million proposed by President Nixon.

Mr. Ryan said specialists in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare had been overruled last spring when they recommended a major Government effort to aid the estimated 400,000 young victims of lead poisoning.

The Government estimates that 400,000 children a year living in dilapidated housing contract lead poisoning from eating paint chips. Only 16,000 are treated. Some 200 die and 4,000 suffer brain damage.

Meanwhile, in another development the Food and Drug Administration said that the decorations on ceramic dinnerware, in addition to the dinnerware's glaze, could be a source of poisonous lead and cadmium absorbed by foods and beverages.

"The decal presents a special, newly recognized problem, affecting all types of dinnerware on which it is used," the agency said.

The agency said that under normal conditions such dinnerware presented no health hazard. But it advised consumers not to store acidic food or beverages in dinnerware.

Listed as examples of acidic substances that can leach—dissolve out—heavy metals from glaze or decals were: fruit juices, carbonated beverages, wines, cider, all foods containing vinegar, sauerkraut, cooked fruits and fruit products.

Use Is Blamed In the Poisoning Of Many Children

Washington Star

Washington—Six citizens today requested the Food and Drug Administration to forbid the sale and use of all lead-based paint, believed to be responsible for poisoning 250,000 to 400,000 children annually.

"The generation that is suffering from lead-based paint poisoning today is eating the walls of the 1930s and 1940s," their petition said.

"The generation that this proposed regulation seeks to protect is yet unborn," it said.

In 1969, confirmed cases of paint-induced lead poisoning totaled 122 in Philadelphia, 73 in New York and 467 in Chicago.

The petitioners are Joseph A. Page, an associate professor at the Georgetown University Law Center; Anthony L. Young and Mary O'Brien, law students at Georgetown; Rep. William F. Ryan (D-NY); Jack Newfield, a New York freelance writer and Dr. Edmund O. Rothchild, a New York physician.

Their petition refers to "pica," a little-understood phenomenon that affects children aged 1 to 6. Pica produces a craving to eat non-food substances—even among well-fed youngsters.

That condition, coupled with the traditional use of lead as a base for paints used on household interiors, is believed to be responsible for the deaths of approximately 200 children a year, most of them between the ages of 1 and 3.

In those cases where death or brain damage is prevented, youngsters often suffer from anemia, convulsions, kidney damage, paralysis or muscular impairment.

Lead Poisoning in Children

Dr. Jesse L. Steinfeld, the Surgeon General, said last fall that estimates of the number of children in the United States with dangerous blood levels of lead range as high as 400,000. Municipalities that have conducted lead-screening studies have normally found elevated blood levels in 5 to 10 per cent of the children tested, he added.

The problem of lead poisoning is limited almost entirely to children between the ages of 1 and 6. The main public health solution to it at present are screening programs to find and treat children who have elevated blood levels of lead, and cleanup programs to remove or cover the lead-based paint that causes the danger. Since World War II, lead-based paint for the interior of homes has been replaced by lead-free paint, but much of the old

covering still exists in low-income housing.

The amount of Federal money to be spent on the problem during the next fiscal year is now under consideration by the Labor and Health Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. A bill is expected to be reported out this month.

In a letter to Mr. Ryan a few weeks ago, Elliot L. Richardson, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, said the \$2-million request "signifies the Administration's clear intent to mount a concerted effort to eliminate the threat of lead-based paint."

When asked recently what could be done with that amount of money, an officer in the department, who is directly involved in the Federal effort replied: "Not a great deal, really."

Ryan Says U.S. to Test Paint for Lead Content

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25 (UPI)—The Federal Government will soon begin analyzing about 8,000 brands of paint and publicly disclose which can cause lead poisoning, Representative William F. Ryan, Democrat of Manhattan, said today.

At the same time Mr. Ryan said that a New York City testing program had identified 16 paints as far as exceeding the lead danger level.

Paints containing more than 1 per cent lead are generally considered to be potentially dangerous, especially to children who, over a period of time, acquire lead poisoning by eating chips of paint that fall from walls and ceilings.