

January 7, 1948

Mr. Alex Stewart,
Director of Research,
National Lead Company,
105 York Street,
Brooklyn 1, New York.

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Since your very pleasant visit to the Laboratory I fear that I have been more than usually busy, and I have probably neglected writing to you concerning the experimental work which we discussed to some extent, at the time of your visit. Moreover, I find that my notes concerning what I was supposed to do are just a bit sketchy. In any case, I was and am very much interested in the type of problem which you brought to our attention, and in the place which your experimental program might occupy in the rather broad program of investigation which we have in mind in relation to lead compounds. It seems very probable to me, at this time, that I pointed out to you the present status of our experimental facilities and indicated that we would be prepared to undertake experimental work, of any considerable scope, only after our new facilities had been made available. In any case, this seems to me to be our situation, and I should not want to mislead you into the belief that we can accomplish very much until some time beginning in the second half of 1948. I may or may not have outlined our general program to you, but I think you will be interested in it, and it seems just as well to call your attention to it in writing. Incidentally, the work of construction on the new wing of the Laboratory is coming along at a good rate. We are now looking into the matter of equipment, and we have run into no obstacles, so far, which would appear to threaten us with serious delay. Consequently, I expect to be able to move into our additional laboratory shortly after the mid-year.

Our investigative program involves careful and systematic study of the rate of absorption and the means of disposition in the body, of lead compounds, as the result of the inhalation of lead distributed in the air in the form of known pure lead compound of known particle size dispersed in the atmosphere. We plan to construct a respiratory chamber of sufficient size to serve as office or small laboratory in which one individual can carry on his day's work, thereby acting as an experimental subject for eight hours per day on five days per week. We shall follow the general plan of our systematic studies on ingested lead, and therefore will be able to measure the total intake and output of lead on the part of such an individual over periods of weeks, months, and, I hope, years. The manner of handling this problem will not be too difficult except for the availability of a suitable series of human subjects. This will be costly investigative work, but I think we now know how to handle

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it, and it seems to me of the utmost importance that the facts be worked out in detail. The financial support for this work is assured, but I am anxious to enlist the interest of people in the lead trades in this fundamental research. I consider it to be of greater importance, practically, in relation to the general problems of the lead industries than any experimental program that has ever been considered in connection with this problem. I should be very greatly pleased if we could enlist some degree of financial support from certain other organizations in the lead trades, not so much because we need the money, but rather because we would like to attract the interest of lead industries in certain fundamental investigations, which have the greatest import in matters of industrial hygiene as well as industrial management. However, I deviating from the prior purpose of this letter.

With respect to your problem, which I have designated as "The Toxicity of Paint Films, Including Solvents, Vehicles and Pigments," it is my feeling that we might best employ the next several months of 1948 in a comprehensive survey of the literature of this subject. The chances are very good that we have most of the material, except that which relates to the solvents and vehicles. With respect to the latter we shall need the advice of yourself and your associates, with respect to the types of paint that must be considered. You have called our attention, specifically, to paints which are primarily made up of zinc chromate or red lead. You probably have your own ideas on the nature of the problems involved herein, and I shall welcome your suggestions and advice as to the nature of the hazards around which your thought revolves. In any case, I should appreciate your outlining what you have in mind, as a starting point as clearly and specifically as possible.

I cannot tell you at this writing just what we shall be able to accomplish. However, if you are prepared to make an appropriation at this time, we shall make a beginning of the literature search. One of our literature secretaries is quite familiar with much of the literature on lead, and it seems likely that we have one of the most extensive reference files that is in existence. If you wish to make an appropriation at this time, I should suggest that you make available a sum not less than \$1,000.00 or more than \$2,500.00. This will amply cover the first six months of 1948, and perhaps by the middle of the year we shall be able to see our way into a more effective program of investigation. I think I acquainted you with our general way of operating. In any case, I am sending you a copy of our simple form of agreement which is subject to modifications that do not conflict with University policy. By this means you will see that we employ funds on a specific project, only in relation to the actual time the personnel spend on the specific problem. Accounts are rendered at regular intervals, preferably quarterly. The work can be discontinued at any time on suitable notice from the sponsor, and any funds remaining unexpended when the work has been terminated will be returned to the sponsor with a full accounting of the expenditures made. Otherwise

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any funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year will be returned to the donor or employed in future work agreed upon.

If you should care to inaugurate a program of this kind to be continued on some mutually agreed upon basis from year to year, I suggest that you have the agreement executed in proper form and with sufficient number of copies so that you and the business office of the University, and the Dean's Office of the Medical School, will be supplied with copies of the executed agreement. We are quite content here with an informal copy of agreements of this type, since the Board of Directors of the University is actually the contracting authority.

I do not like to close without referring to the fact that you and your associates appear to be interested in the establishment of a fellowship in industrial medicine. I believe I gave you the necessary information on this, but if there should be any additional question, please do not hesitate to let me know. It so happens that I shall be in New York during part of the week of January 19, and if it were advantageous, I could meet with you and some of your associates if you so desire. I mention the fellowship at this time, since we are rather anxious to determine the number of places we shall have available for graduate fellows well before the middle of the year.

May I also, at this time, extend the season's greetings, although somewhat tardily.

Cordially yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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