

August 27, 1954

Mr. Charles W. Hancock
912 Broadway
Bayonne, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Hancock:

Your letter of July 14th came to my desk from the Assistant Dean of the Medical School some weeks ago when I was on vacation. Since my return, it has had to take its turn among many other things clamoring for my attention. I regret that it has gone unanswered for so long.

In replying to your last question first, let me say that industrial medicine is taught in this school both to medical students and to graduate physicians, and that this Department is engaged primarily in research and teaching in this field. I and other members of our staff have been engaged in this type of work and in medical practice in this field for most of our professional lives.

Despite my willingness to help you or to give you advice, there is little I can do or say without direct information. What you say about your experience and condition does not convey any useful information, nor do the analytical reports tell me anything of importance, and when you tell me that your doctors have been unable to help you, I find it necessary to learn from them just what your condition is. No useful purpose will be served by attempts on my part to answer your questions or to inquire into your symptoms. If you could refer me to one of your doctors who has or has had access to information about your work and to your medical records, I shall be glad through him to try to acquaint myself with the facts and to advise you accordingly.

With respect to the metals about which you are concerned, it may well be as you say, that you have been subjected to hazardous exposure to some of these materials, but the spectrographic analyses do not prove that or contribute anything to the information required. The elements which have been detected qualitatively in the welding rods and their coating are not necessarily a source of danger to those who use the rods in welding. These elements, practically without exception, are found in the tissues and organs of normal healthy people in small quantities, as a consequence of our living our lives on the earth, the crust and soil of which contain these elements. They are harmful to us only when they are absorbed into the body in excessive concentration. These are facts which have to be taken into account in the consideration of any medical problems that relate to these metals.

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If you will put me in touch with one or more of the doctors who have examined you, I shall be glad to give him and you any assistance that I may be capable of.

Sincerely yours,

RAK:vr

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.