

October 23, 1947

Mr. Philip Drinker,
The Journal of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology,
Harvard School of Public Health,
55 Shattuck Street,
Boston 15, Mass.

Dear Phil:

I hasten to answer your letter of October 16 concerning Treon's paper. I am glad to give you my reaction both as an investigator and as an editor, so to speak, of your Journal.

First let me say that this paper has exactly the same implications as that of Deichmann. What I said in my handwritten letter to you about Deichmann's paper applies equally well to this. These two pieces of work were done at considerable expense, because there was a problem of industrial health, which an industrial organization recognized and considered worth its while to pay for. Obviously these compounds, all being intermediates of the manufacture of sulfonamides, have no very widespread use in industry. However, they are matters of industrial toxicology and at the present time they have no other significance. Therefore, if the work is not published in a journal such as yours, there is no proper place for it. I take it that a problem related to an industrial hazard, which we consider important enough to spend our time on, and which an industry considers important enough to spend its money on, is worthy of publication in a journal that concerns itself with problems of industrial toxicology. If I had not felt this way, I would not have consented to investigate the subject in question. Our time and facilities are too valuable to use in fruitless and irrelevant investigations.

Now I realize also, that your Journal may not be able to cover this entire field, and therefore you have to pick and choose. My offering to defer the expense of printing was made not because I doubted the propriety or the advisability of your choice of the paper for publication, but rather because if your capacity was filled up with material which you consider to be more important, we might be enabled to expand the size of the publication.

I am not prepared to urge you to accept this paper, for to do so would be unfair. I do say that if you consider Deichmann's paper acceptable, it is quite understandable to me why you would consider this one with reservations, since they are part and parcel of the same problem. I do say also that it is extremely wasteful, in terms of the dissemination of information, for investigators to spend their time and effort on material that cannot be made available to their colleagues. That is the purpose of the Journal, and if our journals

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do not fulfill this role, we should investigate the matter very carefully to see what can be done about it. Otherwise it is all too likely that the same problem will recur, that someone will investigate it at the expense of his time and money, and that then on an acute issue, results of the investigation will be published. Our journals have to be somewhat related to the needs of the moment. However, they should be the source to which we refer for information when it is needed.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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