

The Shell International Petroleum Co., Ltd.,
St. Helen's Court,
Great St. Helen's,
LONDON E.C.3.

Original: Group Pers.
Relationships

Dear Sirs,

MILK FOR SPRAY PAINTERS.

We have received repeated requests, through our Joint Works Committee in Mombasa, for an issue of milk to spray painters. We have turned these down since masks are issued, the painting is done in the open, and leaded paints are infrequently used.

Our position, however, has been seriously prejudiced by the action of Stanvac who in 1959 started to issue 1 pint of milk per day to rail tanker operatives, tanker filling operatives, certain lubeoil blending plant operatives, and both spray and brush painters. They claim that this has been done on medical advice to counteract the dryness of the throat caused by inhaling fumes of leaded gasolines and paints.

We have consulted our own medical adviser and the Chief Inspector of Factories. They explained that about twenty years ago it was thought that milk acted as a solvent for any lead imbibed by painters; this was subsequently discounted by the medical profession, but many firms continued to issue milk, partly because it is always difficult to withdraw a free issue and partly in the interest of general health and higher productivity. Hence the demand by painters elsewhere for similar treatment.

We feel that the criterion should be whether milk is necessary to counter possible ill effects on the health of the individual resulting from his particular job; we issue tank cleaners, for instance, with milk and bread on the basis of specific medical advice. If there is no question of health

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being affected we are reluctant to issue milk as to do so would result in an increasing demand for it from anyone coming into contact with gasoline and other vapours, and ultimately, perhaps, in a demand for "danger pay".

We would be grateful, therefore, for your advice on what

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