

Lebe MSS
Box 99

June 10, 1965

Mr. B. D. Doyle, Manager
Professional Employment
Socony Mobil Oil Company, Inc.
150 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Doyle

I wish I could suggest a candidate for the position of Plant Physician in your Company's Paulsboro Refinery. It would be both a privilege and a pleasure to be of some help to your people, and at the same time to be instrumental in the placement of a well-trained industrial physician. Unfortunately, we have no one to offer. The men who will have completed their training by the end of this academic year (this month) are committed to positions in governmental agencies (Air Force, Army or Navy), having been assigned to us for a period of training, by the respective agencies. During the past three years, very few wholly independent physicians have sought training, and while the prospect for next year is distinctly better we now have enrolled only graduate physicians who have been sponsored by governmental agencies in this and other countries (Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand, Colombia S.A.), a few by specific industrial organizations, and only one American physician seeking such training on his own choice and responsibility.

I recite these facts for only one reason. I have come to be convinced that, if training in Occupational Medicine is to compete on anything like even or reasonable terms with other fields of specialized training in medicine, a concerted effort will have to be made by representatives of well and favorably known industrial organizations in this country to set forth the need for such professional personnel. This can be done, I believe, in at least two ways. From time to time, young, promising physicians make themselves available at refineries and other industrial establishments to carry out certain necessary medical services. Only rarely do those men have any real concept of the services of preventive medicine that can be provided. A period of training, extending for

Mr. Doyle (2) June 10, 1965

several months to two years, would make invaluable industrial physicians of these men. This would be an excellent investment for industries, comparable to their investment in fellowships and scholarships in technical graduate training whereby the supply of research and technical personnel is augmented and maintained.

The other procedure is that of making a demand that the medical profession (organized medicine and organized medical education) assume its responsibilities for the training and entrance into practice in what has come to be one of the most important fields of need in this country. I am sure that certain competent and respected spokesmen for industry could do this in such a manner as to indicate that there is an urgent demand for physicians in industry; that professional training is necessary, and that the rewards professionally and economically are commensurate with the needs. Almost no important body of medical men - young or old - is convinced of these facts. They need to be made known, and I suspect that only alert and knowledgeable industrial management can make them known in an effective manner. I have exercised all of the influence I could command within the profession and the medical schools for many years, and I have thought that this was the proper approach. The slight success which I have achieved has led me to believe that more potent external influence is required.

May I suggest that you might talk to Dr. Saunders about this, and find out whether he finds this idea acceptable in principle, and possibly feasible in practice. If so, perhaps it deserves some further exploration.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Director

RAK:meh

P.S. Perhaps I should be ashamed of the elaborate plea which I have made, in reply to a letter from you which could have been answered briefly and factually. Recently, however, I have sounded out a number of our industrial friends in a similar manner, when the opportunity presented itself. I hope to strike a few sparks.

RAK