

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

April 30, 1951

The following letter is in your letter of April 24, 1951, regarding technical and scientific work of the National Bureau of Standards, Director, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Wolcott Pitkin Chapman,
Post Office Box 871
Greenwich, Connecticut.

Standards, I am sorry that I cannot give you a more complete answer at this time. I am sure that you will understand the necessity of this.

(Dear Mr. Chapman:

I have for acknowledgment your letter of April 24, addressed to me at the National Bureau of Standards, concerning the activity of that Bureau in general, and that of the Commodity Standards Division, in particular.

At the offset, let me give you some background information.

In 1921, when our work in simplification began, we were known as the Division of Simplified Practice, in the National Bureau of Standards of the U. S. Department of Commerce, and established to cooperate with industry in eliminating avoidable waste, through reduction in non-essential sizes and varieties of manufactured products.

In July, 1927, the Bureau set up a Division of Trade Standards to collaborate with industry in developing Commercial Standards covering grades, qualities and testing of manufactured products.

In July, 1947, the Bureau combined the Division of Simplified Practice, and the Division of Trade Standards and assigned certain additional duties to a new Commodity Standards Division.

In July, 1950, the Commodity Standards Division was transferred, within the Department of Commerce, from the National Bureau of Standards to the Office of Industry and Commerce, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, where we are functioning in the customary way.

Since the 1920's the Department has been privileged to cooperate with American industries in formulating voluntary Simplified Practice Recommendations and voluntary Commercial Standards, on a national basis. This activity, initially advocated in a report, "Waste in Industry", and published by McGraw Hill Book Company (1921), but now out of print, is described in the enclosed mimeographed material.

At this point it is pertinent to mention that we are assisting the Economic Cooperation Administration to introduce simplification to industries in the Marshall-plan countries as a useful tool in increasing productivity.

RG 167/Records of NIST, Records of the Director, 1923-63, Director's Correspondence
Box 19
Folder: "Commodity Standards"

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TO	

Mr. Wolcott Pitkin Chapman
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The earlier sentences in your letter of April 24 deal with the technical and scientific work of the National Bureau of Standards. The Director, Dr. E. U. Condon, would be glad to respond to your questions, I am sure.

As a preliminary to any inquiry you may address to the Bureau of Standards, I suggest that you study: (a) the recent Annual Reports (fiscal) of the Department of Commerce; (b) the current Congressional Directory; and (c) the current U. S. Governmental Organization Manual.

These references may be consulted at the following depository libraries, in New York City: College of the City of New York; Columbia University; Cooper Union; Fordham University; New York University; New York Public (Astor Branch); and New York Public (Lenox Branch).

I have discussed my own Division first because you indicated in your letter that that was what you wanted. If I knew the use to which you desire to put this information, I might do a better job. Anyway, you are welcome to pose questions as to the details of our activity.

The enclosed folder describing the three scientific periodicals that the National Bureau of Standards publishes is for your interests

Sincerely yours,

Edwin W. Ely, Chief,
Commodity Standards Division.

6 Enclosures.

Blind CC: Dr. E. U. Condon.