

October 25, 1949

Dr. H. H. Smead,
Medical Director,
Solar Aircraft Company,
18th and Grand Avenue,
Des Moines 5, Iowa.

Dear Doctor Smead:

I hasten to reply to the last two paragraphs in your letter of October 20.

This Laboratory had its beginnings in the middle 1920's, when I and my associates began the investigation of the toxicity and hygienic potentialities of tetraethyl lead, with respect to the manufacture, distribution and use of this material and in the use of gasoline containing it, as a motor fuel. From that beginning we went on to investigate other industrial chemicals, under the sponsorship of other industrial organizations, and we have since continued as a university laboratory under the systematic study of occupational hazards, particularly of the chemical variety and of hazards to the public health that may arise coincidentally.

The original laboratory building was completed late in 1930, and a very sizable addition was made to it, this having been completed only very recently. The entire facilities were provided by a group of industrial organizations, as outright unconditional gifts to the University of Cincinnati, and the entire budget of the Laboratory is provided by grants made by industrial organizations for the investigation of specific materials and products and occupational conditions. For the purpose of conducting any piece of work we enter into an agreement which protects the rights of the University and prescribes the rights of the sponsor of the work. We operate entirely as a university laboratory under the complete authority of the University administration, and all of our contracts and policies are based on orthodox university procedure. In considering any investigative program we undertake to work out with the sponsors what should be done and how it should be done and what it should cost. Work is performed at actual cost, as determined by conventional cost accounting methods, and the sponsor agrees to defray the entire cost of the experimental program. Every effort is made to inform the sponsor as to the progress of the work and as to the current cost, so that there will be no misunderstanding with respect to the results of the work or the cost.

In addition to its intramural investigative program, we conduct field investigations of a variety of types, such as that of surveying industrial plants and giving advice and technical assistance on matters

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of industrial health. We also have studied environmental conditions in a number of communities in relation to specific problems of air pollution, and we have also made systematic studies of industrial workers, maintaining a diagnostic survey in connection with hygienic problems and medico-legal situations.

In recent years we have also initiated a program of graduate training for physicians who plan to practice in the industrial field. In short, having started as a purely physical or toxicological laboratory, we have expanded our activities to cover the whole field of industrial hygiene and industrial medicine, having become one of the medical centers in this country for the conduct of teaching and research in this particular field.

Our staff represented once by a few people numbers about eighty, and our activities once supported by one or two industrial organizations now involves more than a score of such organizations.

I believe this will give you the information you require, and I attach hereto a short form of agreement which presents the general conditions under which our work is carried out. It so happens that my primary scientific interest, for many years, has been in the matter of the behavior of the metals. Therefore, you would find me receptive to any opportunities presented to carry on further studies in this particular field. In view of the general investigative program of the Laboratory, however, we would be much more favorably inclined toward a fairly long-term program rather than in a simple investigation of the primary toxic effects of the absorption of metals. In general, the industrial problem is a long-term affair, in that the effects of prolonged absorption of tolerable or relatively low daily dosages of these materials constitute our principle concern.

Cordially yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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