August 23, 1946

Dr. Graham Edgar,
Ethyl Corporation,
Chrysler Building,
New York City 17.

Dear Graham:

The matter raised in the letter attached to yours of August 9 is one of obvious importance. It is a difficult matter to solve, and I am inclined to feel that it would be settled substantially in accordance with one's social philogophy, modified perhaps by one's immediate interest in avoiding trouble. Thus I am sure that Mr. Pettegrew would welcome an answer that would simplify his problem in dealing with the men, while at the same time his own point of view is obviously against paternalism.

I agree that it is wise to find out what other companies are doing. On the other hand, I am not sure that it is necessary to be guided too much thereby. My own point of view is based on the following facts and general considerations:

1. The plant at Baton Rouge is not sufficiently varied in its activities to provide a highly diversified type of employment with respect to partially disabled individuals;

2. Much of the work is hazardous, and therefore disabled people in certain categories have to be kept away from exposure to these hazards;

3. The creation of a job merely for the purpose of employing men whose services are not needed is an essentially dishonest and uneconomical procedure which is justified only in the rarest circumstance. Even when so limited, it is an objectionable practice, and one very likely to cause trouble with other workmen.

In view of these facts I am disposed to feel that men whose disabilities arise from natural causes and who are not employable in valid jobs in the plant, should have their employment terminated. Men with occupational disabilities which disqualify them for work on the plant should also have their employment terminated.

The question of disposition of these cases after termination of employment divides itself into two categories. The men whose disabilities are of natural origin should be given every reasonable consideration with respect to terminal compensation or pension, and every assistance that can be given in obtaining positions which they can hold down. The pension or terminal compensation should, I think, be related to the length and perhaps

e quality of the service during employment. The assistance in obtaining further employment is merely an expression of good will plus a proper interest in the sound economy of the community in which the company does business. For example, it is not wise, so far as it can be avoided, to turn one's employees out on the public for support. On the other hand, in the final analysis, an individual industry cannot take the place of the community as a whole without improper assuming responsibilities.

In the case of the occupationally disabled worker, the situation is quite different. Here the industry has the responsibility. The State or the Community, as such, has assumed some of this responsibility through its creation of various forms of compensation insurance. To the extent that such insurance cares for the disabled employee the industry is absolved from responsibility. However, it is my feeling that any failure on the part of the State to take the full responsibility requires an additional effort on the part of the industry to make the individual whole.

I trust that what I have said above does not sound either oracular or academic. Since you have asked my opinion, I am merely stating the principles by which I would be guided in such matters. I hope what I have said may be somewhat helpful.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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