

June 22, 1971

Dr. Gerhard Lehnert
Department of Occupational and
Social Medicine
University of Erlangen
Nürnberg, Germany

Dear Doctor Lehnert:

You may be aware of the fact that I agreed to see that the material made available at the Conference in Amsterdam in November of 1968, was published in the Archives of Environmental Health (one of the journals sponsored by the American Medical Association for the past ten years or so). It has been a long time, admittedly, since this Conference was held, but the work has been done to this end, and I have various things to report to my colleagues who met there, together with an explanation of the outcome.

First of all, the Archives is not in position, in terms of the general policies (and budget) under which it operates, to publish the Proceedings of conferences which it does not sponsor initially and arrange (through representative persons) so as to have only original papers, the contents of which have not been published previously. Furthermore, its Chief Editor and Editorial Board always reserve the right to accept or reject all manuscripts provided to them, and also to recommend for publication elsewhere good material which is not entirely relevant to the scope of the interests of the Archives.

These matters presented a series of problems to me in the way of limiting the substance of the Conference through other than the acceptable papers presented, which, of course, had to be put in the form and structure acceptable to the Archives. These policies, in short, limited me in doing anything other than that of editing papers which were found to be acceptable by the Editorial Staff and the reviewers of papers for the Archives. I shall not bore you with all of the details, which were time consuming and in some respects troublesome. In addition, I was interrupted in this work by a series of other and somewhat urgent obligations, for despite the fact that I have retired from my former University of Cincinnati post, under the rules of the University with respect to age, I am still at work, but without any administrative responsibility, in the Kettering Laboratory. I developed a labyrinthitis, also, unfortunately, in the spring of 1970, and was greatly slowed down in my schedule of work. However, I have done as well as I could, and the task of preparing the papers for publication is now finished and they are in the hands of the Chief Editor.

With respect to your paper on "Lead as a Cybernetic Problem," I regret to say, although I cannot quarrel with the decision concerning it, that it has been recommended that it be published elsewhere. Two factors are responsible for this. First, it has not seemed that this concept of lead poisoning has anything to do with the

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development of standards by which the health of workmen in the lead-producing and lead-using industries is to be protected. I am aware that this is not strictly true, but it is sufficiently near the truth to indicate the applicability of the second consideration, namely, that this paper should, we think, have a different audience than that supplied by the Archives. It has been recommended, therefore, that you be so informed that you have a free hand to publish it elsewhere. Incidentally, if you wish me to return the manuscript to you, I shall be glad to do so. I presume, however, that you have an extra copy or copies and that you will be able to submit them to another journal.

I fear that you and certain other participants in the Conference may be unhappy about this decision, primarily, perhaps, because it may seem to be a professional indignity. It is certainly not so intended, and I think it is fair to say that the exact purpose of the Conference was not made entirely clear to any of us before our arrival in Amsterdam. I am sure, for example, that, had I known just what we were intended to do by the Permanent Commission and the governing group in the International Association, I would have made preparation for it. Moreover, I would not have offered my services to the group to deal with the Archives, had I anticipated what I would be up against by way of policy and permissible performance. However, what has been done is done, and little can be done now to alter the situation. I simply hope that you and members of the group in general, will feel that the meeting itself was beneficial, and that we are better acquainted with each other for having met together to talk about our mutual problems. I hope, further, that we shall meet again (hopefully, at Buenos Aires in September 1972) at other meetings. Dr. P.S.I. Barry has told me of his meeting with you in your Institute, where he had the privilege of discussing with you certain aspects of your work. It would be a source of pleasure to me to have such an opportunity.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

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