

FOUNDATION FACTS, 1947-48

ANDREW FLETCHER

President, St. Joseph Lead Company
Chairman, Board of Trustees, Industrial Hygiene Foundation

Members and Guests of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this, our 12th Annual Meeting. I can well remember the early years of our activities, and the skepticism with which Industry, Labor, and Governmental Departments viewed our proposed program of research directed toward the improvement of conditions for the American Workman, and for the community in which he lives. The foresight and courage of the original organizers has certainly been amply repaid in dollars, as well as in human happiness. Today the Foundation is sound financially, our membership now includes most of the leading industrial companies, and our name and findings are known throughout the United States--in fact, in many far distant lands. There are no Industrial Hygiene Foundations elsewhere in the world. The foreign visitors, who come to us, have difficulty in understanding that the Foundation is a wholly voluntary research organization, supported by industries united for the well-being of workers.

Mr. McMahon, our Managing Director, will give you a short report on the Foundation's affairs, and it is therefore unnecessary for me to comment on the results accomplished since our last meeting. You will be filled with a sense of satisfaction and pride in his report, and in the list of our new members. But we must not become complacent, as only a start has been made in the research that is necessary to solve the many hygienic problems that face, and will continue to face labor, management, consumers, and, in general, our entire population.

Research Needs and Implications

I had the great privilege of spending two weeks during last September with the top ranking officers of our Navy, who discussed their problems, as well as the relationship of industry to the Navy. I was greatly impressed by the attitude of the Navy toward the necessity of research, and I was extremely interested in the comment that the war would have been greatly extended if England had not developed, through research, the relatively crude radar that enabled their small airforce to successfully repel the large German bombing flights. It was also stated that the war might even have been lost, if Hitler had continued expenditures for research in the development of new weapons instead of stopping such expenditures in February, 1941 and not resuming the research on guided missiles, fast submarines, etc., until November, 1942. In the past, Europe largely provided the well-springs of fundamental research, and the research in the United States has, for the most part, been concerned with the practical application of fundamental scientific facts. For instance, we took the German work in nuclear