

April 19, 1946

Honorable James E. Murray,
Chairman, Education and Labor Committee,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Murray:

Your letter of March 18, 1946 addressed to G. C. Harrold, former secretary of the American Industrial Hygiene Association, and the questionnaire relating to legislative proposals for improving the nation's health, were brought to the attention of the Board of Directors of the Association at its recent meeting on April 9, 1946. At this time our discussion resulted in agreement that it would not be possible for us to reply with any degree of usefulness to a number of the specific questions. On the other hand, it seemed wholly desirable to take cognizance of the sincere interest of this organization in the general aims and purposes of such legislation. Accordingly, as the retiring president of the American Industrial Hygiene Association, I wish to give expression to our point of view.

The American Industrial Hygiene Association, both as an organization and as a body of interested professional people, is deeply concerned with all matters that have to do with the health of our industrial population. The aims of the organization and its membership involve careful study of environmental conditions in industrial establishments and the reactions of individuals thereto. We are very much concerned with the further development of the scientific investigation which is necessary for the understanding and control of environmental conditions, and with the training of professional personnel, both medically and technically, who will have the professional responsibility for judgment and practice in this important field of community health.

Experience of recent years, including the war years, has demonstrated the need for intensive and extensive efforts in safeguarding the lives, the health, and capabilities of industrial personnel. This is a field of professional activity which from the point of view of prevention, is relatively new. There is a tremendous need for greatly expanded research activities. Almost every factor which influences the

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the industrial environment is in need of more thorough investigation. In addition to the need for investigation, there is the very great need of trained personnel who are familiar with what is known and who at the same time are aware of the shortcomings of our present information. Unfortunately there are almost no means available in this country at the present time for the well-rounded technical and medical training that is required to produce capable and well-informed practitioners in this field. The industrial hygienist with engineering training has had to adapt his engineering knowledge and skill to the requirements of preventive medicine. Likewise the physician with orthodox training in medical work has had to adapt his medical knowledge to a situation which is quite different from the private practice of medicine in which he has been trained. The result is that both groups in this field have had to learn their way about by experience, neither having had the benefit of the professional training that would have acquainted them with the difficulties and the requirements of their professional work in advance of their entrance upon it. As a consequence of these facts, there is great need for the development of extensive facilities for research in this field and for the comprehensive training of men to be industrial physicians on one hand and engineers of industrial hygiene on the other.

These needs, as we see them, are the greatest that confront us, and we shall be found willing and anxious to give vigorous support to any program of legislation that will tend to implement or facilitate progress in these directions. Obviously here we are thinking not of momentary improvements or panaceas but a fundamental program of investigation and professional training that will move steadily toward the solution of the hygienic problems, both occupationally and generally, of this great group of our population.

Meanwhile the Association will continue to assist in the achievement of the purposes indicated above through the means now open to it, - that of publishing the results of the investigations of its members and disseminating information in its annual scientific sessions.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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C.C.: Mr. Frank Patty
Mr. Allen D. Brandt

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