LEAD INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION, INC.

292 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

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To All Members of the Health and Safety Committee:

Attached for your information is a copy of the latest news clip I have seen in which Professor Harry Warren of the University of British Columbia is featured.

I had an opportunity to talk with Professor Warren during his stay here and found that he has little that is new to offer but a great deal more of the same. He is very sincerely following up his statistical studies of the relationship of trace metals in the soil to disease.

Very truly yours,

Don Fowler

Don O. Fowler, Secretary
Health and Safety Committee

DOF:md
Enc.
cc: C. J. Stopps

Look Ahead with Lead

THE NEW YORK TIMES, Monday, November 18, 1963

RELATION OF LAND TO DISEASE HINTED

More Studies Advised on Geological Influence

By HAROLD M. SCHMECK Jr.

Tantalizing correlations between man's diseases and the character of the land on which he lives were discussed here yesterday.

At a symposium on relationships among geology, trace elements and nutrition, speakers cited evidence hinting at correlations between geography and heart disease, or between the lead content of soil and water and multiple sclerosis.

The speakers stressed that any such correlations might be pure chance and therefore did not necessarily imply a cause-and-effect relationship.

On the other hand, they noted, such associations may prove to be valid clues linking environment and disease through complex chains of circumstance.

For Testing Elements

Prof. Harry V. Warren, geologist of the University of British Columbia, urged more studies pooling the scientific resources of geology, geochemistry, the agricultural and forest sciences and those of medical research to assess the effects of trace elements on health and disease.

"It is possible that some of the afflictions with which today we are trying to cope are related to imbalances of one or more trace elements, such as copper, zinc, lead, mercury, arsenic, molybdenum, selenium and vanadium," he said.

Such imbalances are called trace elements because they are normally present only as minute traces in soil, water and living tissues.

Scientific interest in the role of some trace elements has grown considerably in recent years.

More Interest Shown

The importance of trace elements may have grown, Professor Warren said, because man is now farming soils less homogeneous than the river delta lands on which agriculture started; because human population has grown immensely in just 100 years and because, more than ever before, man is artificially altering the trace-element content of his environment.

As an unusual example of this he said, studies have shown the lead content of vegetation adjoining some stretches of American superhighways to be far greater than "normal."

The evidence suggests that plants are picking up lead from automobile exhaust fumes, he said.

Professor Warren and his colleagues have found several areas in the British Isles and Scandinavia where a known high incidence of multiple sclerosis has matched an abnormally high lead content of soil, water or food vegetation. At least two dozen such localities have been studied in the last three years, he said.

Multiple sclerosis is a serious disease of the central nervous system, the cause is unknown, though many theories to account for it have been advanced.

At least one report 30 years ago sought to link the disease with lead, but, as with the other theories, conclusive evidence has never been found.

In another talk Dr James M. Hanta of the Federal Public Health Service said studies of death from heart disease in Georgia had yielded unusual geographical relationships.

The symposium, at the Commodore Hotel, was an opening session of the annual meetings of the Geographical Society of America, Paleontological Society, Mineralogical Society of America, Society of Economic Geologists, Geochemical Society and the National Association of Geology Teachers.