

July 23, 1954

Dr. R. A. Kehoe

Dear Doctor Kehoe:

I am sorry I did not get to talk with you before you left, because as I stated to you over the phone, I regard the request or suggestion of Dr. Page as of considerable importance to our activities and fundamental policies.

I am not at all sure that our total overall activities as a Corporation Medical Department have not deteriorated somewhat and the reflection of this may be a part of Bob Page's attitude. It seems to me that in reaching any decision about a change in activities in the direction of Dr. Page's suggestion, it would be desirable and necessary to review and evaluate our activities in the field first.

If the purpose of the examinations is served by our examinations, then they are not cursory, as described by Dr. Page, even though they are not comprehensive or detailed. On the other hand, it is conceivable that a very detailed examination may not serve what we conceive of as our purposes at all.

It is entirely possible, however, that our examinations are at times really cursory. Time schedules are sometimes set up which may give adequate time for the examination of young and healthy people, but do not leave adequate time if any difficulty is encountered. It is, therefore, sometimes tempting to examine cursorily in order to meet other commitments. If on review of our own activities we find that our work is not serving our avowed purpose and is cursory to that extent, certainly correction

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should be made. If the examinations are serving our purpose, let us inform Dr. Page that our examinations are not cursory.

If the purposes of our examinations are reviewed and found to be unnecessary, let us of our own accord terminate them.

I have reason to believe that Dr. Gehrman would terminate the examinations immediately if he (and perhaps others in his organization) did not feel it expedient to continue them because of the competitive business situation. I would believe, therefore, that Dr. Page has found a welcome supporter to his views. I would believe that the reasons given for the requested change in our policy is not entirely what appears on the surface and that there are other ulterior motives.

The only sound and valid reasons I can see for objecting to our examinations are:

- (1) that they are meaningless (which could be, of course, a sound medical reason); and
- (2) that they occupy a certain amount of employees' time which is costly.

The answer to the first objection has been considered. The answer to the second is that the cost is very small if the examination serves a purpose.

My objections to acceding to Dr. Page's request are:

- (1) even though the Jersey examinations are detailed and competent and comprehensive, they may not serve what we regard as the purposes of the examination; and

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(2) I cannot conceive of complying with the request as far as the Jersey Company is concerned and refusing to comply with the same request from another company whose medical department we might regard for any of many reasons as unreliable. It is my belief that if we comply with the Jersey request, all field examinations will be terminated within a few years, whether we believe they should be terminated or not. This will result in the completely uncontrolled situation which has been avoided for the past thirty years.

I would be opposed to complying with Dr. Page's request excepting as we ourselves find modification of our program desirable independent of any opinion from outside our own organization.

As to the belief that we may be deteriorating as a Medical Department, it seems to me that our relations with and advisory capacity to the Safety Department are not as close as they should be (this belief may be incorrect, and may be due only to my present ignorance of the relationship). The medical services to the personnel of the Corporation is certainly spotty, being excellent, I believe, in some instances and certainly inadequate in others. Particular reference is made, of course, to the field staff of the Corporation. This has always been a somewhat awkward if not difficult problem, but it is certainly not insurmountable.

We are hardly an organized department and rarely does the

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right hand know what the left hand is doing. I am hardly so naive as to believe in any concerted thought or action, but some more common knowledge of divergence of thinking would be desirable. The attitude that occasional meetings are difficult or impossible is untenable and represents a lack of interest in such a meeting or preoccupation with other affairs.

Lester W. Sanders, M.D.

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