

Albany, West Virginia



Mr. J. E. McClain
Mr. E. E. Kelly

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November 18, 1955

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CCD 2-1-1956

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On November 17, Mr. McClain and I accompanied Dr. Suskind of the Kettering Laboratory to a meeting at the Workmen's Compensation Commission in Charleston. Representing the Commission at this meeting were the Occupational Disease Board composed of Drs. Brick, Biern, and Aliff. Mr. Jack Canterbury, Legal Assistant, Mr. Harry Bess of the Occupational Disease Division.

Dr. Brick presented a copy of a report by Dr. H. F. Smith and Dr. R. E. Kelly addressed to Mr. Paul Halley dated 1950 and asked Dr. Suskind to comment on the findings reported. Dr. Suskind said that he is familiar with the report and commented on the technique employed reporting that Drs. Adams, Spencer, and Irish who originated this technique using the ears of rabbits have since abandoned it. Kettering Laboratory has attempted to duplicate some of their work and have found the same epithelial hyperplasia and folliculitis as reported, but no acne was produced. Dr. Suskind states that it is not possible to pre-determine acnegenic properties of new compounds by this rabbit ear test.

Dr. Brick inquired if there was any difference histo-chemically between acne vulgaris and chlor-acne. By use of diagrams Dr. Suskind showed the comparison of the two types of acne and stated that histologically the two are the same with the exception that chlor-acne lesions contain somewhat more free cholesterol.

Dr. Biern asked what causes acne. Dr. Suskind said that this is a very large question and that there are many things yet to be learned. However, it is believed that acne vulgaris is induced in the male by testosterone and in the female by progesterone. This opinion is based on considerable experimental work with animals but does not preclude the effect of other androgenic substances. Chlor-acne has only recently been produced experimentally at the Kettering Laboratory by applying Halowax 1014 in 20% concentration or higher to the human forearm for one week or more. It is certain, therefore,

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that materials in contact with the skin can produce chlor-acne, but the possibility that it may be produced by other means is not ruled out.

Dr. Biern asked whether skin reaction can be due to stress phenomena or from a fear overlay. Dr. Suskind said he would be afraid to hazard a guess, but work has been done at Cornell University with young acne vulgaris patients subjected to interview stress. Measurement of sebum output showed a stress increase of as much as 400% in acne cases only; in non-acne cases the increase was very slight. Whether this pertains to Monsanto chlor-acne cases is difficult to say.

Dr. Brick inquired whether the material which the board saw being packaged during their plant tour was 2,4,5-T and was told that it was. He then asked whether that was the material which was given to Dr. Suskind for testing, and Dr. Suskind replied that that was one of the materials submitted. At this point Dr. Brick talked about the air survey made by the State Department of Health, and when a copy of their report could not be found, he talked to the State Industrial Hygienist. He seemed distressed at the report that all samples had shown measurable amounts of 2,4,5-T whereas he had been given the impression that there had been nothing discovered. He has requested the Industrial Hygienist to furnish the board a copy of the survey report. At this point he insinuated that Monsanto could be more careful in handling the 2,4,5-T and spoke of seeing continuous automatic packaging operations at the duPont plant. Dr. Brick also inferred that much of the information concerning the chlor-acne problem had at one time or another been held secret from the board. His impressions on these two matters did not appear to be reflected in the other board members.

Dr. Suskind told briefly of the animal test done with 5% solution of various materials from the 2,4,5-T process and with Halowax 1014. He reported that there was no reaction or change in any of the animal studies or in human subjects exposed to the same 5% concentration.

Dr. Suskind then described the work using Halowax 1014 and recrystallized 2,4,5-T on animals and humans. He reported that no acne or skin manifestation had been induced in any of the animals by either of the materials but that on human skin chlor-acne had been produced with the Halowax, but there was absolutely no reaction from the 2,4,5-T.

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The conference continued with conversation dealing with the overall aspects of the chlor-acne problem, and E. Biern read excerpts from the transcript in the recent Dewey Garton hearing for Dr. Suskind's benefit. The meeting seemed to be appreciated by the commissioner's representatives, and it is believed that a favorable impression was created.

Both John McClain and I feel that in view of Dr. Erick's somewhat critical comments, we should prepare a fairly comprehensive story of the entire chlor-acne situation which should include not only the experimental work done at Mellon and Kettering but investigational work done in the plant in connection with the autoclave incident. We believe that this should be made available to the Occupational Disease Board together with copies of any reports which we have that have not been made available to them. Such information can be given to them with the stipulation that it is for their evaluation only and is not to become part of the public records.

At the end of our conference at the commission offices, Dr. Suskind together with McClain and I discussed our problem with Mr. Paul Bowles and Mr. A. G. Stone at their offices. Both Dr. Suskind and Mr. Stone feel that it would be wise for us to follow up on the Kettering recommendation that periodic air sampling be made in the 2,4,5-T plant. Both McClain and I expressed doubt as to the value of information so obtained unless it be used to counter Dr. Halloran's accusations.

We discussed the findings of Dr. E. H. Nestmann concerning psychoneurosis in most of the employees he has examined for us. Mr. Stone is apprehensive as to the implications that may be drawn if this is submitted as evidence. The attorneys and Dr. Suskind all read a paper which I obtained from Dr. Nestmann concerning some of his evaluations on other patients using the Cornell Medical Index, and Dr. Suskind suggested that he could have an opinion on the value of this type of testing from Dr. W. D. Ross a psychiatrist at the Kettering Laboratory. I indicated to him that we would be interested in such opinion.

The future work which has been outlined for consideration at the Kettering Laboratory was reviewed with the attorneys, and Mr. Stone made the point that while distilling the phenol may eliminate chlor-acne, it may not change the incidence of "Halloran's Disease."

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Mr. Bowles gave Dr. Suskind a complete set of the summaries of the legal cases on which evidence has been accumulated to date.

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