

WHITE LEAD DIVISION

New York, N. Y.

March 17, 1950

A meeting of the White Lead Division was held in the office of the Lead Industries Association, New York on Tuesday March 7, 1950 at 10:15 A.M.

PRESENT

- B. D. Starnes
- H. H. Keller
- A. R. Enright
- J. P. Smith
- D. A. Stevens
- Alex. Stewart
- C. R. Ince
- P. R. Norman
- C. L. Laferre
- H. R. Taylor

REPRESENTING

- American Smelting & Refining Co.
- Engle-Fischer Sales Co.
- Barton Lead Co.
- Clackson Co.
- National Lead Co.
- National Lead Co.
- St. Joseph Lead Co.
- St. Joseph Lead Co.
- U. S. Smelting Refining & Mining Co.
- U. S. Smelting Refining & Mining Co.

B. L. Siegfeld, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 A.M., with Mr. Siegfeld acting as temporary chairman.

The chairman asked for nominations for a permanent chairman, whereupon Mr. Norman was nominated and the nomination seconded. There being no further nominations it was regularly moved, seconded and carried that nominations be closed. Mr. Norman was thereupon elected chairman unanimously.

The chairman stated that the Association had funds amounting to a little over \$66,000, originally subscribed some years ago for the purpose of advertising white lead and which remained there the previous white lead advertising program was abruptly terminated by the War. The purpose of this meeting, he explained, was to determine whether at this time some positive action might be taken as an urgency to improve the market for lead pigments in house paints, using the funds in the treasury, and if so, just what kind of a program could be devised. He pointed out that the Association's Board of Directors at its last meeting, had asked the president and secretary to investigate the possibilities of lead pigment promotion.

The secretary said that he had discussed informally with each of the pigment producers present the desirability of such a program and that there was general affirmation. He further said that he had discussed the details with Mr. Starnes who, he believed, could outline the sound technical basis for a program which might receive general approval. Mr. Starnes was asked to outline his ideas.



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Mr. Stewart said that the lead pigments act as stabilizers in paint films by reacting chemically with the decomposition products of the film to form insoluble compounds. They also act as plasticizers in the same way. Lead pigments also contribute beneficially to the mechanical characteristics of the film and examples were cited. Zinc pigments are also reactive in the film, but whereas the resulting lead products form a tough, elastic film, the zinc products are hard. He showed photomicrographs to demonstrate that the insoluble lead soaps formed have long interlocking crystals accounting for the improvement in the properties of the film, whereas the zinc soap crystals are short. He pointed out that this is the same manner in which lead compounds serve as stabilizers in vinyls. Samples of high and low lead content paint films were submitted to demonstrate dramatically the relative toughness of the high lead content film. Other examples of improved properties of paint films through addition of lead pigments were cited.

Mr. Zoller expressed the opinion that most paint chemists already know the facts Mr. Stewart had stated but Mr. Ruth felt that that was not true of the men who actually made the final recommendations and decisions on paint formulation in paint companies, although it might be true of research men down the scale in the laboratory who had little influence on formulation. He also pointed out that while there may be a half dozen large paint companies who know all about it there are more than 1,000 smaller ones who could be impressed and who could collectively influence the larger ones.

Mr. Merson said that it had been found that the promotion of paste white lead by the industry was not practical. He felt that individual members should continue to sell paste white lead in whatever way they could but that it should not be "plugged" as a group. He also felt the same way about group efforts to promote ready mixed pure white lead paint as it is generally recognized that other pigments add some desirable properties to a ready mixed paint. He, therefore, felt that the industry should eliminate any thought of fighting against the incorporation of other ingredients in paint but that the industry's efforts should be directed towards getting substantial quantities of lead used in paint for the properties which lead, itself, adds. He was sure that all present are convinced that some lead makes a better paint. He felt that we did not want to lose the market for lead in paint by default without making some effort to retain it, or increase it. He, therefore, felt that the problem resolved itself into:

(1) Some paint companies, such as the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. and E. I. duPont de Nemours & Co., Inc. are producing leadless paints. This has shaken the confidence of many other paint grinders in their own belief that paints containing lead are better. Therefore, many grinders may follow the lead of such people as Pittsburgh unless their confidence is restored. Since he felt that the makers of leadless paint can not prove that leadless paint is better now is the time for the lead industry to prove that they are wrong in making their leadless paints and to restore the confidence of paint manufacturers in lead.

(2) The public, in general, has not been sold on the idea that they must have lead in the paint which they buy in order to get the best paint.

Mr. Ruth felt that the biggest part of the battle is with the heads of paint grinders' laboratories. Most paint grinders are trying to make cheaper paints and they must be convinced that lead is worth the few cents more which it costs in the formulation of paint.

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Mr. Zoller said that he felt exactly this way ten years ago and that the work should have been done at that time. He merely wondered whether we are too late in starting this work now.

Mr. Wormer pointed out that the mining companies had a deep interest in knowing whether money should be spent to save this market for lead or whether they should spend it to look for other markets.

Mr. Merson pointed out that we have a substantial sum of money in the treasury originally appropriated for the promotion of white lead. None of the members wanted this money returned to them all wanted to find some way to spend it constructively. He felt that in spending it any gain would be all to the good. He looked upon anything we did now with these funds as a gamble which might pay off. He felt that the logical approach was to the paint grinder whose confidence in lead has been shaken since it would be entirely too expensive, for the size of the market, to try to convince the public. He thought we should try to restore the confidence of these paint grinders with advertising, propaganda and personal contact. The member companies are already doing considerable amount of personal contact work with the paint companies but he felt that the advertising men among the member companies could devise trade paper advertising and brochures which might have an effect upon paint grinders.

It was pointed out that the market potential was huge, that raising the lead content of the average exterior paint to only 2 lb. per gallon would result in the sale of more white lead than had ever been produced.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that the approach should be that lead is not put in paint for hiding but for other functions, such as durability.

Mr. Merson pointed out that red lead, which was in a bad way several years ago, is on the way up today. He said that the industry could have let it go by default but knowing that red lead served a purpose that could not be duplicated by zinc chromate or other competitors considerable amounts of money were spent to prove it. He felt that the Navy during the war, when it would use no red lead, was like the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. is today so far as white lead is concerned, and that the promotional efforts for red lead had gone a long way towards changing the Navy's views.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that the lead pigments are the cheapest plasticisers and stabilisers that could be used in paint.

Mr. Zoller emphasized that any promotional work for white lead should promote white lead as such without defining specifically the various white lead pigments involved.

In summarizing the discussion Mr. Wormer made the following points.

1. That it was agreed that something should be done to promote white lead pigments in house paints promptly.
2. There should be no differentiation between the various white leads.
3. That advertising in paint trade papers which would reach the paint formulators should be used.

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4. That these should be supported by technical or semi-technical brochures directed at the same group of people.

5. That technical papers should be prepared for presentation at technical paint meetings and for publication in the trade press.

As a result of the foregoing discussion, the secretary was directed to get together with the advertising and technical personnel of the lead pigment manufacturers as soon as possible to work out a detailed program and budget and to report back to this group for approval. The secretary agreed to have such a program ready by the time of the Association's annual meeting in Chicago on April 13-14, and it was thought that this group might get together for breakfast on April 14 to pass upon the program.

Robert L. Ziegler
Secretary.