

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

W. O. THOMPSON, PRESIDENT

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
E. F. MCCAMPBELL, PH.D., M.D.
EMERY R. HAYHURST, PH.D., M.D.
JAMES S. WILSON, M.S., M.D.
NORMA SELBERT, B.S., R.N.
L. H. VAN BUSKIRK, B.S., M.D.

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COLUMBUS

February 7, 1925.

Dr. R. R. Sayers,
U.S. Public Health Service,
Department of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Sayers:

I have just received two letters from Mrs. Grace M. Burnham, Director of the Workers' Health Bureau, New York City, one containing the details of a severe criticism of the recent official report on the tetra-ethyl investigation. In this, apparently, Dr. Paul Reznikoff, formerly associated with Dr. Aub, has assisted her. To my mind the criticism is very largely a lot of misinterpretation based on inferences contrary to fact which can be easily answered satisfactorily to any impartial person. Some of the points are undoubtedly worthy of consideration and are due to curtailing the details of certain parts of the report.

I have suggested to Mrs. Burnham that she send a copy of her criticism to you and also to Mr. Fieldner. Also, that she and if possible, Dr. Reznikoff, visit the experiment station in Pittsburgh for first hand enlightenment.

Having noted that the New York Health Council has permitted the sale of ethyl gasoline and tetra-ethyl lead under certain restrictions, Mrs. Burnham now fears that attempts will now be made to extend the sale of the products and wishes to discredit the report of the U. S. Bureau of Mines and hopes to get the backing of Dr. David Edsall and Dr. Cecil Drinker and perhaps Dr. Haven Emerson, as well as Dr. Yandell Henderson and Dr. Alice Hamilton in so doing. On this point I have strongly advised her to go slow and that the present report of 8 months' study is only a preliminary one. Also that, according to my personal observations, several more months' continuation of the experiments have failed to disclose evidence of lead poisoning or other intoxication. Therefore, she should pursue the safer policy of presenting her criticisms and waiting for the results before undertaking more questionable procedures.

Her second point is to have the Surgeon-General appoint a committee of investigation "to air this whole matter in an impartial manner". In this she wants to see that labor is represented on the commission. I have informed her that such constituted my opinion to the Surgeon-General, after the reports of three or four investigations were published provided they showed any evidence of hazards to the public or employees.

I am writing similar letter to Mr. Fieldner. I would suggest every accommodation possible to satisfy various critics.

Yours very sincerely,

Emery R. Hayhurst
Emery R. Hayhurst, M.D.

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W. O. THOMPSON, PRESIDENT

COLUMBUS

February 13, 1925.

Dr. R. R. Sayers,
U.S. Public Health Service,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Sayers:

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dated*

I have just received a letter from Mrs. Grace M. Burnham, Director of the Workers' Health Bureau, New York City, from which I am led to infer that she is not going to forward you a copy of the criticisms drafted by the Bureau on the recent report from the Bureau of Mines on exhaust gases from engines using gasoline. I consider there is some value in the criticisms and have had it copied and enclose same herewith. The criticism appears to me to cover about everything imaginable. In the meantime I have advised Mrs. Burnham as one of the Advisory Committee of the Workers' Health Bureau to stay out of the controversy which is directly one between scientists and research workers at this stage. I have also assured her that there is no emergency apparent and that it is quite unwise for the Bureau which she directs to take a position antagonistic to state and government health officials.

I am sending another copy of the criticism to Supt. A. C. Fieldner.

With kindest regards,

Yours very truly,

E. R. Hayhurst
E. R. Hayhurst, M. D.

W. R. B.

February 13, 1925. FRS/SJD

Dr. E. R. Hayhurst,
Ohio State University,
Columbus, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Hayhurst:

We very much appreciate your sending the information in regard to the Workers' Health Bureau, New York City. I discussed the matter with Mr. Fieldner and with Dr. Thompson. They are of the opinion that it would be well if you could write a review or editorial for the use of the American Medical Association and it would be well if this was sent to the Association at the earliest date possible. If I remember rightly, you were intending to do this and may have already prepared the article and may have sent it in. If not, I think that such an article would be appreciated by all concerned.

Dr. Drinker and Dr. Edsall prepared an editorial, to appear in the Journal of Industrial Hygiene, in which they criticize our article rather severely. It is believed that their criticisms cannot be substantiated. Dr. Drinker was very kind in sending me an advance copy of the article, to which I replied that I did not agree with some of his statements. To date, the article has not appeared but may appear in the February number.

I do not think that we need to worry too much about criticism, as all groups that have been carrying out extensive studies on this subject are in agreement.

We shall, of course, be glad to show anyone what we are doing and how we are doing it, if they care to come to Pittsburgh.

Yours very truly,

R. R. SAYERS
Chief Surgeon, U.S.B. of M.
Surgeon, U.S.P.H.S.

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RRS

February 17, 1925. RMS/SJD

Dr. E. R. Hayhurst,
Ohio State University,
Columbus, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Hayhurst:

I appreciate very much your sending me copy of criticisms of Mrs. Grace M. Burnham, Director of the Workers' Health Bureau, New York City, on the paper which we recently published in regard to tetraethyl lead. Many of her criticisms are very easily answered, a few of them are more difficult to determine, and some of them may never be answered. Some of her criticisms are justified and have already been corrected.

We should be very glad to have Mrs. Burnham come to Pittsburgh, if she so desires, and assure her every possible courtesy. I think she would have a much better understanding of our work and her attitude toward it would be different. Much of her criticism seems to be predicated on the assumption that we are prejudiced for tetraethyl lead.

With kindest regards, I am

Yours very truly,

R. R. SAYERS
Chief Surgeon, U.S.B. of M.
Surgeon, U.S.P.H.S.

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3. If so, methods of regulating and controlling the danger would have to be worked out.

4. So far as animal experiments went, it was first necessary to determine whether any of them were poisoned by lead and thereafter perhaps to determine the various peculiarities of the poison which the various animals showed. Obviously our experiments have shown this is all a negative question, thus far at least.

5. The danger to the semi-public, that is, garage workers, etc., was the next problem to be determined and has not yet been worked out.

Apparently our critics have dropped the matter of danger to public health.

Please do not call a meeting for Thursday, March 5th. I can make the following week (Thursday), or any subsequent time very conveniently. Tuesday or Saturday is also convenient for me but I understand not so much so for some of the others.

Yours very sincerely,



E. R. Hayhurst, M. D.

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JOHN E. MONGER, M. D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

JAMES E. BAUMAN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
COLUMBUS

ADDRESS ALL OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE
TO THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

OFFICES:
THE HARTMAN-OHIO BUILDING

LABORATORIES:
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

SUBJECT:

February 24, 1925.

Dr. R. R. Sayers,
Chief Surgeon, U.S.B. of M.,
U.S. Public Health Service,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Dr. Sayers:

I find that your letter of Feb. 13th
needs some reply. I also wish to acknowledge yours of
the 17th.

I have been out of the city some of
the time. I question whether a review or editorial
for the American Medical Association would be accepted
by any^{one} other than from their regular reviewers and editorial
writers. I am quite sure that my old Professor, Dr.
H. Gideon Wells, Head of the Dept. of Pathology, Univ.
of Chicago, writes the material along this line for the
editorials in the American Medical Journal. Would it
not be well to send him a copy of the Bureau's report
with that suggestion.

As you know I prepared an editorial
for the American Journal of Public Health. Also Dr.
J. H. Shrader of Baltimore has prepared a very good
paper upon the subject. Some of the material in my
proposed editorial was, on agreement, transferred directly
to his paper. Both will be out in the next issue of the
American Journal of Public Health.

I have just received intelligence from
the Workers' Health Bureau stating that Dr. Yandell Henderson
considered their analysis "very good". I have a copy of his
comments in which he states that the main point in which the
report is defective is that the experiments which the report
describes do not apply to real conditions. The animals under
test were kept in an atmosphere containing exhaust gas and
dust only up to 4 parts of carbon monoxide in 10,000, whereas
the atmosphere of public garages at least is often contaminated
to a far greater extent. Therefore garage workers will be
exposed to several times as much lead dust as were the animals
reported in the experiments. Dr. Henderson also states

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that he learns on good authority some additional substance may be added to ethyl gas so as to enable all of the lead to be blown out of the exhaust instead "of caking in the muffler as happens at present". "It is not necessary to question the accuracy of the chemical analyses carried out by the experimenters at the Bureau of Mines Station. Even if these analyses are absolutely correct, the experiments are so poorly planned that they do not apply to the actual problem. In a garage dust accumulates from week to week and month to month. In the experimental chamber at Pittsburgh, on the contrary, the volume of air blown through was so much that no accumulation of dust could occur. In the experiments as carried out the animals were placed in a room through which exhaust gas diluted with a large volume of air was passed. It would have been a nearer approach to real conditions if the exhaust gas had been blown through the chamber for several weeks without putting animals into the chamber. Then when an amount of dust had collected corresponding to that which occurs in a garage the exhaust could have been shut off. The animals could then have been made to live in this dusty room for a few weeks. An experiment of that sort would have approximated real conditions in a garage."

Dr. Henderson also takes exception to a hazard from lead to workers in repair shops and garages which is as great as that now existing for painters in their profession. He states that "you are free to use these statements either publicly or for transmission to the New York Health Council, if you think they will be of use."

A letter which the Workers' Health Bureau received from Dr. Alice Hamilton states that she wonders whether the Bureau had not better wait until they have something more to go on than they have just now. She advises them to see Dr. Emerson and to hear from Dr. Henderson before making any further steps.

It appears to me that the main issues have been overlooked by most of these critics. If we will look back into the history of the question we will find, I think, that the problems to be taken up fell about in the following order:

1. What became of the lead which was put into the motor?
2. Was the public health endangered?