

MEMORANDUM TO MR. E. W. WEBB

Concerning a Tetraethyl Lead Manufacturing Plant in Germany

Purely commercial considerations make it imperative that there should be no recurrence of episodes of lead poisoning in the manufacturing end of the industry. The two points of vital importance in the prevention of difficulties from this source are, (1) that the information on equipment and methods of manufacture which has been acquired by years of experience at the duPont Dyeworks Plant shall not be permitted to be in-operative, and (2) that the details of hygienic control which have been built up through experiment and experience shall not be neglected or ignored at any point. It is conceivable that the manufacturing experience of the German Corporation which is concerned in the contemplated negotiations will have given them reason to believe that they can cope satisfactorily with the problems associated with the manufacture of tetraethyl lead. On the other hand, there is the certain evidence that many years of careful study and the expenditure of large sums of money were required before the duPont Corporation was enabled to manufacture tetraethyl lead with safety. Even now, despite all efforts and all the measures of control, there is one group of workmen in the manufacturing plant, whose present lead exposure and absorption is of such magnitude as to convince me that additional precautionary steps are required to provide that degree of safety which is desirable. Accordingly, therefore, the writer is of the opinion that the interests of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation would be jeopardized by entrusting to any other Corporation the responsibility for the choice of manufacturing equipment and procedures, and for the adoption of methods of hygienic control. The methods and measures which have proven themselves should be transplanted to the new manufacturing

site, and should be put into actual operation by those persons in the duPont and Ethyl Gasoline Corporation organizations who have been responsible for their development and use. Any other course is almost certain to result in danger, delay and unjustifiable expense, and may be accompanied by tragic consequences. Therefore the negotiations leading up to an agreement or partnership should, in my opinion, be carried on so as to promote and maintain the dominance of the judgment of the officials of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation in all matters related to construction, operation and hygienic control in the new plant, at least through a preliminary trial period.

Specifically this recommendation signifies that the details of plant construction should be made subject to the approval of representatives of Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. Such representation should inaugurate and control the trial period of operation, so as to put into effect the safety measures which have been worked out and recorded for each step of the process. Moreover the extent and the nature of the medical control of the plant should be in accord with the requirements of the Medical Department of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. Doubtless these points will have to be couched in somewhat less direct language than is employed herein, but the essential purpose and intent should be preserved by the terms of agreement, regardless of the delicacy of the phraseology.

The only person who knows the details of the manufacturing and safety procedures is Mr. J. L. Stecker of the E. I. duPont de Nemours and Company. He should be permitted by the duPont organization to devote whatever time is necessary to the promotion and development of this project. He should be in charge of the first operations of the new plant and should remain on the job until operations proceed satisfactorily. Perhaps he can delegate some of the responsibility to one of his assistants.

The medical arrangements should be developed on the

ground either by myself or Doctor Machle, and certain details of the construction of the plant which, in my opinion, can be beneficially changed, should be worked out through the cooperative efforts of Mr. Stecker and either myself or Doctor Machle.

The repeated reference to Mr. Stecker does not imply that the counsel of Mr. Schaefer is to be ignored, but, in some degree, he must be regarded in the capacity of a critical student of the entire process of plant development, in this first manufacturing development.

APPENDIX

Attached hereto is a memorandum in which certain details which will influence the construction and the cost of operation of the plant, are pointed out, mainly for the information of Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Stecker.

Respectfully submitted

(Signed)

Robert A. Kehoe

Director of Medical Department