

January 5, 1930

Mr. A. E. Mittnacht.

Dear Mr. Mittnacht:

I have your letter of December 29 in which you indicate that the medical department of the Standard Oil of New Jersey finds itself somewhat embarrassed at present in complying with our request for samples for analysis on their man, John Taylor. I should state at the outset that if they do not wish to do this at this time, it is not a matter of very great consequence to me, and I shall not embarrass them further by insisting upon obtaining the samples. However, I should point out that they have somewhat of a misunderstanding about the matter. Our request was based on the following idea. From time to time we have made it a point to examine into the question of the lead excretion of men engaged in the mixing of Ethyl Gasoline, in order to obtain a cross-sectional idea of the exposure, if any, involved in this work. We have naturally selected for this purpose those men who have had the most exposure or about whom for any reason whatever we might have the slightest suspicion of lead absorption. Mr. Taylor happens to be one of those who was selected for this purpose. There is no reason to suspect that he has had a remarkable exposure, and there is no reason for believing that he has lead poisoning. He comes within the group of selected persons at this time merely because he had a little higher than average stippling at the time of the last examination of his blood. Our previous experience leads us to believe that this is not significant, but in line with our efforts to keep a complete check of the entire situation we are following out a more or less regular routine. Just why such a request should upset the medical department of the Standard Oil of New Jersey I find it very difficult to explain, but since they have found it very difficult to understand anything that we have ever requested of them I am quite agreeable to allowing them to do this in any way they choose. I might add, however, if there is any place in the United States in which a little real information would be of some value, it would appear to me that that place would be Bayway. I might further say for your own ears, that I should think that with all the handling of their men that has occurred in recent years they would be a little skeptical about acting on their own judgment. If any industrial situation has ever been messed up it is theirs. If I am just a little caustic in this last remark I think you will understand that it is be-

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cause I believe that this whole situation at Bayway has arisen from misunderstandings and the timidities of their medical staff. Perhaps I may be pardoned a little irritation.

I repeat, however, they may do as they like.

Sincerely,

RAK:EJ

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