

December 24, 1941.

Mr. C. C. Furnas,
National Defense Research Committee,
1530 P Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Furnas:

Replying to your letter of December 17, let me say that I shall do as you think best in connection with the problem of cleaning gasoline containers. I expect to be in Cincinnati steadily for some months, with the exception of occasional days on which my work takes me out of town. I can see you almost any time you wish, if I am given a few days notice.

I should be less than frank, however, if I did not say that discussion of this problem is likely to be rather futile, unless we can determine in advance what procedures are feasible in the light of military plans. It seems probable that water from containers employed in the distribution of gasoline can be cleaned. However, this is a purely academic problem, unless we know something of the facilities which not only can be, but will be provided for this purpose.

Perhaps I might also point out that orders have been issued by the War Department, (copy attached), to the effect that containers of this type are not to be used. This is in agreement with our opinion that these containers themselves can probably not be cleaned prior to their use. I believe also this represents a recognition of the fact that other means for transporting drinking water can be provided. I am still wondering, therefore, whether the request for the investigation of this problem has originated from any informed source. I do not wish to be unduly critical, but since I have no idea how this question originated, I can speak freely. A number of other questions have come to our attention from several sources after the primary and responsible persons have been completely satisfied of the facts inquired about.

Please do not misunderstand me, for both I and my associates stand in complete readiness to do any useful work to which we are assigned. We are perfectly willing, if necessary, to sidetrack certain items of experimentation in order to do what seems to be urgently needed. Also, for that matter, we are quite willing to follow orders. However, I am sure you will

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understand our wish to do fruitful work.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK of

C. C. Mr. C. C. Furnas,
Department of Chemical Engineering,
Sterling Laboratory,
Yale University,
New Haven, Connecticut.

Enc.

Circular
No. 203

WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington, September 26, 1941.

EXTRACT

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1. USE OF GASOLINE CONTAINERS FOR CARRYING WATER. - 1. Reports from the field indicate that gasoline tank trucks, drums, and cans have been used for the transportation and distribution of water during the current maneuvers. It has been found that such equipment when once used for gasoline cannot be cleaned adequately for safe use as water carriers and containers.

2. In view of the above, the use of gasoline tanks or other gasoline containers for the transportation, storage, and distribution of water to be used for drinking, cooking, or bathing purposes is prohibited.

(A.G. 457.1 (8-20-41))

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By order of the Secretary of War:

C. C. MARSHALL,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:
E. S. Adams,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

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