

April 12, 1965

Mr. Frank L. Seamans
Eckert, Seamans and Cherin
Attorneys at Law
10th Floor, Porter Building
Sixth Avenue and Grant Street
Pittsburgh 19, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Seamans:

Since I am nearing retirement as the Director of this Department and the Kettering Laboratory (this will come about on July 1st, 1965), I am examining various bits of unfinished work with the idea of bringing them to their proper termination. (I expect, after my retirement, to continue some of the work which has been in my hands, to the point of completion or until I can turn it over into competent hands.) Among matters of this type are certain reports of investigations which have not been published, but which should be made available to our colleagues, for one thing, and should be exhibits of facts which need documentation. Among several such reports, that of the survey of the plant and the employees of Aluminum Company of America & Niagara Falls by Dr. W.F. Ashe and others, in May and June of 1948, is one of the most valuable. This report should be prepared for publication (it can be so prepared with but little alteration), as one of the most significant of American documents of the essential harmlessness of exposure to and absorption of fluoride under the conditions that existed in this industrial plant. The most important feature of the case of Martin vs. Reynolds Metals Corporation, was the lack of suitably documented information, based on experience in American industry, concerning the quantitative aspects of the alleged hazard. I shall never forget my frustration at not being able, on the witness stand, even to mention my direct knowledge of these matters through experience, since to do so would have brought forth requests for evidence which had not been made available. To have admitted that such evidence had not been published was to invite the conclusion that there were good reasons for not having published it. I could never have cleared the Laboratory of connivance in its suppression.

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I may be misinformed, but I have heard that Edward Largent has raised this question with you. Just why he would do this, in relation to a report of the Kettering Laboratory, I wouldn't know, unless it should be that he worked with us, and also, later, with Dr. Ashe, and is familiar with the general substance of the report. Obviously, this was not an appropriate request, coming from him, but I am sure that he had no improper motive or intent, directed at either me or Dr. Ashe, and I would hope that this (if it occurred) will not have obscured the merits of the situation.

I would like very much, both on behalf of the Kettering Laboratory and our colleagues in Occupational Medicine, as well as for the purpose of documenting the soundness of the position of the American Aluminum Industry with respect to this feature of industrial hygiene, to prepare this report for publication, to submit it to you and your associates for examination and comment, and to fit it into its proper place in the literature of this field. It will take time to do this, after my retirement, but it will be a labor of love and enthusiasm. It should be done, and I hope that your consent and that of the management of Alcoa can be obtained. If it seems desirable, I should like, at some appropriate time, to discuss this matter with you and with whomever you wish to include.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

RAK:meh

P.S. There are other parts of our experimental work on fluoride, done mainly under the sponsorship of the several industrial organizations, which should be published, but these are not as important as the item mentioned above.

RAK