

*of Stauffer*

# Stauffer Chemical Company

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Dear Dr. Lederberg,

I want to thank you for spending several hours with us last week to discuss the President's Cancer Panel, Rockefeller University and your program in comparative toxicology and risk assessment. We are pleased to be supporters of your public policy program and feel assured that our monetary contribution will help you establish and disseminate factual information about life sciences questions of public significance.

I am also delighted to learn that you have received a substantial grant from Ford Motor Company to help establish your comparative toxicology program. According to Mr. Garvey's letter of January 17 and our discussion at lunch, that program will "focus on the central issues of how to extrapolate from one species or dose level to another and use the laboratory data and field observations on sample populations to predict and assess risk to a wider consuming public". We have high expectations that you will be able to approach this mission from a rigorously objective and scientific standpoint. I would like to follow developments in this program as closely as possible.

You mentioned the need for "case histories" for comparative toxicology studies. Dr. J. D. Jansen (Shell Internationale Research Maatschappij B.V., P. O. Box 162, The Hague, The Netherlands) gave an interesting paper on "mouse specific" carcinogens at the 10th Inter-American Conference on Toxicology and Medicine in Miami which might provide some leads. According to my notes of the conference, he referred to a number of materials which are positive (induce tumors) in mouse cancer bioassays but are negative in other animal tests, e.g., Dieldrin, Heptachlor, DDT, Phenobarbital, carbon tetrachloride and trichlorethylene. He pointed out that DDT is also negative in rats, hamsters and monkeys and clearly negative in epidemiology studies. He pointed out that most of these chemicals are negative (not mutagenic) in in vitro tests. The chemicals might provide interesting cases for the comparative toxicology/risk extrapolation project. Back up information can probably be obtained by contacting Dr. Jansen. I'd be happy to help, if necessary. Other case histories should be available through CIIT (Chemical

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Industry Institute of Toxicology) and we could pursue that route. Current work of the Institute with formaldehyde demonstrates a species difference between rats and mice in respect to nasal tumor induction.

We spoke about Sam Epstein and his political approach to cancer. I am enclosing a copy of a recent Epstein article on the politics of cancer which appeared in Technology Review (Dec/Jan 1980). I draw your attention to Epstein's statement that "It (cancer) is not a disease of degeneration or aging." By contrast, I note your published observation about the curious age dependency of cancer and the need for more investigation.

Referring to another point of our discussion, Epstein also states that "only about 10% of the NCI budget...is spent on research activities that can be reasonably defined in terms of cancer prevention." He attributes this to distortion of NCI priorities by The American Cancer Society which he says is traditionally explained by an "amalgam of conservatism and ignorance" but possibly by "influence of the wide range of industries in which society directors have direct or indirect financial interests."

Putting aside the unwarranted dig at ACS and Industry, Epstein's comment on NCI funding raises a valid point of how much of the NCI budget is actually spent on "cancer prevention". More specifically, how much is spent on "mechanistic research" designed to understand the processes of cancer initiation, repair, maintenance, promotion, etc. Why don't all heavy smokers get lung cancer? More to the point, is the funding of such programs adequate and are the research processes sufficiently focused to get the answers? We are keenly interested since we have been led to believe the effort is not adequate. Through frustration, we have provided seed money to fund the American Business Cancer (ABC) Research Foundation to look at research and funding needs. Potentially significant gaps were identified at a recent symposium. If there are inadequacies, they should be addressed on a national scale through your panel, not privately. How can we best pursue this? Could the ABC people interface with you or your staff on these questions?

Thanks again for coming to Westport. I hope we can discuss some of these questions in the near future. In the meantime, if I can personally help out in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

*Wayne C. Jaeschke/w*

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