

December 7th 1969.

Dear Professor Meselson,

I feel I ought to try and put a few words together, despite distractions of kids, etc., here at home. The main thing is to ask you for those references to the chemistry of CS₂; do please give these high priority!

I have started doing some reading myself, starting on Chem Abstracts of 1945. To date I have found little, except ~~an~~ use for benzal malononitrile as an insecticide (U.S. Patent 2,347,573; C.A. 39, 150², 1945), but then I haven't spent much time on the problem.

Another interesting thing - Punte's paper on the exposure of human subjects to CS₂ states that one of the investigators (doesn't say which) spent some inside the exposure chamber with the volunteers. Other experiments were also exposed, but, I imagine, nowhere nearly as extensively. Was Punte the guinea pig? I have requested the Daily Sketch (not one of our more reputable papers I fear) to demand that the U.S. Army open its files on the human volunteers, who were exposed before October 1962, and conduct thorough medical examinations.

I am still not happy about the possible carcinogenic effect of CS_2 on a theoretical basis. The hydrolysis forms a carbanion ($-C(CN)_2$), not a [carcinogenic] carbonium ion. I must try and do more reading - I hope to have a little more time when Christmas comes. I have, by the way, about 80 mice on CS_2 ; I hope we get cancers by the spring.

One last thing - aqueous metabisulphite seems to be fairly effective in dealing with light exposures to CS_2 . Whether ^{or not} it would work with larger amounts I can't say.

I hope your visit to England proved to be a pleasant one; I hope to be able to entertain you and your wife here on your next trip.

Very best wishes,

Robert Jones.

[G.R.N. JONES]