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Letter from David P. Rall to Henry Spira

David P. Rall
Department of Health & Human Services

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National Toxicology Program
P.O. Box 12233
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

March 3, 1983

Mr. Henry Spira, Coordinator
Coalition to Abolish the LD₅₀
234 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10001

Dear Mr. Spira:


I am enclosing a copy of the FY 1982 National Toxicology Program (NTP) Annual Plan which provides a detailed account of the Program's efforts to improve current test methodology and thereby protect the public health. You will receive a copy of the FY 1983 Annual Plan when it is published.

I believe the LD₅₀ was a useful test at the time at which it was developed. It served the scientific community well for many years. However, advances in toxicology which have occurred since its introduction now allow us to better characterize toxicity without using this test which is now an anachronism.

Dr. John A. Moore, NTP's Deputy Director, will be an official participant in a meeting May 24th and 25th at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore to present his views as part of a program on "Acute Toxicity: Purpose and Practice." Because, as I have previously said, I do not think the LD₅₀ test provides much useful information about the health hazards to humans from chemicals, the NTP does not use the LD₅₀ nor does it have an official position on its use.

This issue is properly raised with those Federal Agencies which conduct or which by regulation require LD₅₀ tests in public health regulation.

Sincerely yours,


David P. Rall, M.D., Ph.D.
Director