

June 23, 1970

Miss Nell Conway
600 West Orange Grove Road
Tucson, Arizona 85704

Dear Nell:

As I told you in my letter of April 6, I wrote to friends of mine - technical men - in the Detroit Laboratory of Ethyl Corporation, who would be most concerned in the means of clearing the air of exhausted substances from the tailpipes of automobiles. I had word from them that they were looking into the matter about which you told me.

I don't mind telling you that I was very skeptical about the likelihood of the removal of lead (and other materials) from the exhausted stream of the motor, and when I did not hear promptly from Detroit, I had assumed that I was correct in my judgment. This, as you well know, is not my field of expertise, but I've been aware of the things which have been tried out through the years, for I started the Detroit group in looking for some means of doing this, with respect to lead, over twenty years ago. The trouble has been, and continues to be, that the bulk of material exhausted requires a bulky piece of equipment to take out the particulate material, and this, while feasible mechanically, is not regarded as practicable in use on everyman's automobile. The bulky material for the removal of the particulate material has to be replaced frequently, and it is not believed that a large proportion of the owners of cars will attend to this, and also bear the cost.

This is but a little of the background of the situation. When, therefore, a few days ago, I had an informal (verbal) report from the Laboratory, I was not surprised to learn that the prospect for Mr. Waterman's invention is not very bright, at least at the moment. My friends were loath to speak too harshly of the situation, but I gather that this is not believed to have a good future. This, I may say, appeared to me to be the case, for a number of reasons.

I was asked to break this news to you gently, if I felt it necessary to speak at all, for despite the urgent need for a satisfactory answer to this set of problems, my friends at the Detroit Laboratory dislike very much to discourage anyone who has an interest in solving it. Moreover, they are very mindful of who you are, and anyone connected (now or ever) with the Kettering Laboratory is in a special category. I have not followed this advice for the reason that neither you nor Catherine (or is it Katharine) can afford to get into a sizeable investment. You should know the truth about this matter at the earliest possible time.

I'm dreadfully sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but I really feel certain that this is not the answer to this problem. I am sure that if anything turns up to offer promise, my technical friends will welcome it with open arms, for the present

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situation, while actually unchanged through the years, with respect to the existence of an actual hazard to the public health, has political and psychological overtones which are very serious.

Please give my regards to Katharine, and my best wishes, as always, follow you wherever you go.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

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