

December 3, 1959

AIR MAIL

Mr. T. R. A. Bevan
Associated Ethyl Company Limited
20, Berkeley Square
London, W.1.

Dear Ray:

I have neither written to you nor heard from you lately, and for this I am sorry. In any case, the nearness of Christmas calls for a personal message to you, while the change in your business household, with the departure of Philip Boyd, suggests the desirability of some exchange of information on that score.

Dealing with the latter first, you will realize, of course, that I have retired from the Medical Directorship of Ethyl Corporation. I have remained on as a consultant at Dynum Turner's request, not as a figurehead, but in connection with various items of the experimental work of the Laboratory which bear on problems of public health, where my background of information and my professional relationships are such as to render it much easier for me than for anyone else to deal with the practical problems that arise. I shall continue in these relationships for some time no doubt, probably until I retire, four years from the end of this academic year (June 1963), if I live that long (I am not being lugubrious in attaching the latter proviso, but merely factual). This year has been an active one in this regard, and one aspect of this matter, which has come to decision recently, calls for some explanation to you and your associates. Not knowing what you have done about a successor for Philip I bring it to your attention directly, as I would probably do in any case.

The situation with respect to an increase in the permissible concentration of tetraethyl lead in gasoline reached a point at which some action had to be taken. I had held this issue at bay for some time, and I suppose I could have continued to do so longer. However, on what seemed to me good evidence, I came to the conclusion that my objection could not be sustained on any other than an arbitrary basis. Accordingly, I agreed to present my views of the matter, along with those of technical representatives of Ethyl and du Pont, to the Public Health Service. This was done last January and a decision was arrived at in August. The details of the procedure are recorded in a publication of the Public Health Service, of which I am sending you two copies by separate mail. Along with it, for your own use, I am sending my full memorandum, an abstract of which appears in the U.S.P.H.S. publication. Since this publication is now a public document, and since my memorandum is to be published by one means or another (probably eventually as a series of articles in professional journals), I am merely expediting your receipt of them. Whether you will encounter any imported gasoline with higher concentrations of TEL than 3 ml. per American gallon in England or elsewhere I have no present way of knowing,

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but through these documents you will be made aware of these facts, which also apply to Canada, without undue delay. I have every assurance that the use of TEL will not be increased greatly by this measure in the U.S.A. and it was this assurance, based on apparently satisfactory evidence, that lead me to withdraw any objection to it. I am sure we can establish the facts concerning the effects of the extended use of TEL long before any real risk can have developed.

Philip Boyd asked me about the possible use of tetramethyl lead as a substitute for tetraethyl lead some months ago, and I told him what I could about the matter. The information I have on this is confidential at present, and I cannot say more to you than I did to Philip when I answered his inquiry. I can say to you, however, in complete confidence, that there is likely to be some commercial use of tetramethyl in this country - perhaps only on a limited and trial basis before the end of 1960.

I shall be glad to know as much as you may wish to tell me of your medical arrangements. I would assume that Pat Barry has stepped into the top position in the department, and I would also suspect that he may not have been brought to London as headquarters. In case you have taken only temporary action, or in case you should have any interest in my advice on any aspect of the situation, I should be glad to be of any help I can.

So much for these matters. My concern of the moment is primarily personal, and my reference to Philip Boyd and Pat Barry are also largely personal. I was surprised by Philip's decision to change the whole course of his professional activity. I am fond of him, as you know, and I hope with all my heart that he has done the proper thing for himself and his medical career. I am prepared to do anything I can to help him. I am also fond of Barry, and if what I suspect has actually occurred, I shall be glad to help him in any way I can. I am sure he knows this, but I'd like you to know that there has been no change in my attitude toward you and your people. The situation of the industry may get a bit sticky in some respects, because of competitive factors. These, as I am sure you know, have nothing to do with my point of view toward the primary hygienic problems, and certainly they do not influence my personal attitudes toward yourself and your associates.

Lucile and I have planned to go to Lisbon at Christmas time, leaving here on a Portuguese vessel from Port Everglades, Florida, on December 13th, and arriving in Lisbon on Christmas Eve, I believe. Katy will meet us there and we shall have a holiday together. I'm looking forward to the long trip by ship for I've been hard-pressed during the past year and need a rest and relaxation. I shall fly home on New Year's day and Lucile and Katy will stay in Lisbon until the ship returns (some ten days later). If any circumstance (which seems improbable) should bring you to Lisbon, we shall be at the Edward (whether Prince Edward or King Edward and the number whether VIII or V) I'm not sure at the moment, (but it is in down-town Lisbon) and would be delighted to see you. I won't have time to do anything else, for I must be back at home on January 2nd, but we shall think of you and Timmy at Christmas time.

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Mr. T. R. A. Bevan

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Give my love to Timmy, and my best regards to my friends at
20 Berkeley Square.

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Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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