January 13, 1939

Mr. Hugh Fossett
Ethyl Export Corporation
Thames House, Millbank
London, S. W. 1
England

Dear Mr. Fossett:-

I enclose herewith a confirmatory copy of my cable of January 11, 1939. A word of explanation is in order.

On reading your letter of December 30th, I came to the conclusion that in view of the urgency of the question raised, we could well afford to take the position that the flexible hose could be tried out. If it works satisfactorily, all will be well. If it does not work satisfactorily, then we should be able to satisfy the American Petroleum people that this is the case and make such modification of the equipment as is necessary to eliminate this difficulty. As you are fully aware, I do not like to have a variety of modifications of our equipment in all parts of the world since it becomes practically impossible to keep track of them and to insure ourselves against difficulties. On the other hand when we are dealing with a situation that causes mechanical difficulty and when customers suggest methods which in the minds of our engineers are satisfactory, we should be willing to examine these on their merits rather than on the basis of our preconception. When this can be done without introducing confusion into our safety program, I think we should be willing to do it. In this country, I have tried to keep exceptional measures sharply limited by making it a requirement that my consent must be obtained before a departure from standard methods is employed. I think we might well make use of the same general procedure with respect to your problems for in this way you will be able to use me as reason for the avoidance of irregularities, unless situations arise which would seem to make exceptions advisable.

There are two problems in connection with the use of flexible hose of the type suggested which I think merit a careful study. The one, obviously, is the durability of the flexible hose in this service. If such hose requires frequent replacement

a somewhat greater frequency of repair will be required than would seem advisable. The other refers to the extent to which lead compounds will accumulate in the material of which the hose is fabricated. Obviously the more accumulation occurs, the greater will be the hazard in connection with the use and replacement of the flexible hose. Accordingly you should keep a fairly sharp eye on the developments which follow the use of this flexible hose. Moreover, if and when the hose has to be replaced, I think you should obtain a section of it, forwarding it to us for chemical examination, along with a piece of unused hose of similar structure, so that we can have before and after data on the lead content. It would be better in this connection if the section of hose were put in glass or metal containers and sealed so as not to suffer any large loss of volatile lead while in transport.

I realize that this will be a little trouble to you but I think in return for our concession, these people might be quite agreeable to supplying us with the necessary material when the time comes.

If this thing works out properly, I see no reason why we might not agree to the use of such flexible connection permanently, where they are necessary and where they are advantageous.

Sincerely yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.