

October 30, 1957

Mr. J. C. Malone
Ethyl Corporation
100 Park Avenue
New York City 17

Dear Mr. Malone:

I have seen fit to modify the statement quoted in your letter of September 12. For one thing it contained a grammatical error which I think must have been typographical, since I hardly think I have permitted "data is" to get by me. This is one of the red flags to which I react editorially with a vigor which is probably out of proportion to its real importance, largely I suppose, because it is so common a mistake. My suggested modification follows:

"The factor of lead discharged into the air from the exhausts of automobiles has been investigated in a variety of ways, periodically, over the years, beginning in 1923, and the results of such investigations have been published from time to time, as the work reached the appropriate stage. The status of the matter can be expressed most simply by saying that no threat to the health of the public has been found to exist, either in terms of the lead content of the atmosphere or on the basis of demonstrable changes in the lead content of the tissues or excreta of persons whose occupations or places of abode have been such as to subject them to more than average exposure to the fumes from the exhausts of automobiles. The factor of safety, with respect to the lead content of the atmosphere of urban centers, is more than ten to one, as compared with that which is generally accepted as the threshold of danger for occupational exposure to lead. Moreover the quantity of lead taken into the human respiratory system from the atmosphere under the most severe conditions that have been found in American cities, is less than one third of that which is taken into the stomach daily with ordinary food and beverages by the average American adult. The evidence is that the total quantity of lead in the atmosphere of American cities generally, not all of which, by any means, owes its presence to the combustion of leaded gasoline in automobiles, does not constitute a health hazard in the course of the human lifetime?"

This may be more than is necessary to say, but it states the facts as they are.

Sincerely yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.