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10th November, 1936.

Dr. R.A. Kehoe,
College of Medicine,
University of Cincinnati,
Cincinnati,
OHIO. U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Kehoe,

Many thanks for your letter of October 27th, which came in this morning.

On hearing of the recent trouble that you had in connection with the cleaning of storage tanks we decided that it might be advisable to bring to the attention of our licensees, the regulations covering this operation as outlined in our blue book of instructions.

In order to impress the point more fully we had a pamphlet printed, a copy of which I am enclosing herewith, and circulated to all companies concerned. With the pamphlet we sent a letter stating that we had thought it advisable to bring this point to their attention, but were of the opinion that the regulations suggested were substantially similar to those already in force in their refineries for the normal cleaning of tanks. In addition we pointed out that the regulations outlined in this pamphlet were already contained in our blue books of instructions.

We requested each company to advise us how many copies of this pamphlet they required, and have arranged for them to be adequately supplied. Further it is being translated into both French and German for circulation in those countries.

In our covering letter we did our best to avoid causing any undue alarm, since in France recently we have been having a certain amount of trouble mainly due to political reasons. The workers' Committees in certain of the Aero engine and Aeroplane factories having raised the question of the danger involved in handling leaded gasoline and the possible ill effects upon their health. As mentioned earlier the trouble is mainly of a political nature and I think, is of no great importance.

We should really have forwarded this pamphlet to you for checking before we sent it out, but since it was substantially similar to the regulations already in force, and we wished to get it out as soon as possible we did not consider it necessary.

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Should, however, there be any points you feel we have omitted or failed to cover adequately, would you please let me know and we will make the necessary corrections and insure that our licensees are fully informed.

When visiting Mixing Plants we make a point wherever possible of discussing this question of cleaning tanks with the superintendent responsible, and I believe that except for gross negligence we should not encounter any serious trouble.

In so far as the handling of Fluid and its transportation is concerned, I think that in the majority of cases we now have this under fairly good control. The Mixing Plants, also are I believe in fairly good shape. We have of course a certain amount of difficulty over the inspection of some of our plants since, they are so widely scattered that it is almost impossible to visit them at reasonably frequent intervals. Certain political and other complications also sometimes increase our difficulties.

Rik Tegner, is at the present time on a trip out East and he hopes to examine every Mixing Plant that we have in operation between Suez and Borneo. During this trip he will check up on the plants in Shanghai and Hong Kong, which to the best of my knowledge have never been inspected since they were installed. He is also planning to visit Balikpapan in Borneo and will take in all other plants such as Palembang, Singapore and also the Indian, Iranian and Egyptian points.

We have quite a number of new plants being erected. Unfortunately, some of them are fairly widely scattered, but we hope during the Spring or early Summer of next year to be able to send someone on a further trip round Africa (Tegner did this trip earlier this year) and this, with Mr. Tegner's present trip should bring our more distant plants fairly well up to date.

The European and North African plants are, I think kept under fairly close supervision.

In regard to the medical situation it is substantially the same as when we discussed it last. Italy being our worst feature.

In the more distant plants we have to rely almost exclusively on the Doctor employed by the Oil Company operating the plant. In a number of cases these plants are erected at refineries or big storage points, and at such places there is no great difficulty. We cannot in every case, however, vouch for the ability of the medical consultant we employ, but we have as far as possible checked up to see that they are sound and also in possession of whatever information we are able to give them. In this connection it might be advisable for us to forward you from time to time a list of all medical consultants retained by us, in case any have been overlooked, and should you consider it necessary, I think it might be worth while your writing direct to each of them to ensure that they have whatever information you consider advisable.

As regards medical inspections with the exception of Italy, I think we are in a fairly good position. Some of our medical consultants have reported sickness amongst the men working on Mixing Plants, and wherever there appeared to be the slightest possibility of lead having any connection with the illness, samples and details have been forwarded to us here and checked either by Dr. Gordon or when necessary analysed.

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by Professor Dodds. In no case has it been possible to attribute the sickness in any way to the handling of Ethyl Fluid. The fact that these consultants have reported such cases to us, I think, means that they are taking their work quite seriously, and I do not see any reason why we should run into trouble unless there is some flagrant breach of our rules or gross negligence which we cannot very well control.

Dr. Coste's work is of course increasing in France since more and more mixing plants are being built in that country each year. I was discussing this question with Colonel Thenault the other day and suggested that he have a word with Dr. Coste to find whether or not the travelling and time involved in making the necessary routine inspections was becoming too much for him. This, I think, is quite possible and it may, therefore, be necessary to retain the services of some other Doctor to act as an assistant to Dr. Coste. We have in mind a certain Dr. Valentin, who you may remember recently wrote a paper on tetraethyl lead. Dr. Valentin, I understand, would be very glad to take over some of this work since he is interested in industrial hygiene. We are waiting to hear from Dr. Coste, however, before doing anything further.

Dr. Boldero approached me earlier this year on the question of his fee. He pointed out that he had now reduced the frequency of his visits to the majority of mixing plants and therefore less of his time was being taken up. In view of this fact he suggested that we might wish to consider a reduction in his fee. I told him, however, that we had no intention of doing this at the present time, but should we consider it necessary we would discuss the matter with him at a later date and make some other arrangements acceptable to him.

In so far as Dr. Gordon is concerned we have not had to call upon him to make any trips up to the present time. He has, however, studied the details of one or two cases put to us by our consultants in other countries, but this work is almost negligible.

There is a possibility that a further ten or fifteen mixing plants may be erected in this country in the near future primarily to satisfy the Government Authorities. In all probability they will be used only for storage, but in any case it will be necessary to have the men in charge of them examined from time to time. We have no definite details on this programme as yet, and I have promised Dr. Boldero that we will go through the matter with him just as soon as some plan has been agreed upon. He has stated that he is quite prepared to examine these new plants if it is only a case of an initial visit, but I think it rather doubtful that he will be able to take on routine inspection of a further large number of plants. Should he be unable to do so then we might split the work between himself and Dr. Gordon thereby making use of the latter.

It is impossible to say definitely but I rather doubt whether we shall have occasion to call upon Dr. Gordon other than for work in this country. I would, therefore, like to have your views on this matter.

The Italian situation is the same as ever although we now have the possibility of making some improvements should it be considered advisable. The difficulty is that we still do not know what is going to happen. The latest position being that Montecatini have approached us with a view to building a plant on their own account

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using our process but operating it entirely themselves. This plan has been put forward due to the fact that the Government are not agreeable to having a foreign corporation interested in the local production of a commodity regarded as ~~an~~ essential for National defense.

Montecatini, however, do not wish to take over the responsibility of selling their product to the Oil Companies in Italy for commercial use, and would prefer that we continue to handle this. We have not arrived at an agreement with them as yet but I feel that the suggestion I have outlined herewith may be the most satisfactory solution to a very unsatisfactory business.

As you know, when Dr. Machle was over here, he and I accompanied by Mr. Campanari paid a visit to Professor Sica of the Health Department in Rome. I am sure, however, that Dr. Machle told you of our discussions with Professor Sica, and there is no need for me to go into further details.

Whilst in Rome we attempted to get in touch with a Doctor from whom we hoped to get the name of someone we could approach to take charge of our Medical Work in Italy. Unfortunately we were unable to get the man in question, but on the suggestion of Professor Sica decided to visit the Clinicadel Lavoro in Milan. Unfortunately Dr. Machle found himself unable to make the trip to Milan and therefore, Mr. Campanari and myself arranged to visit Dr. Preti head of this Clinic. It appears that the Clinicadel Lavoro is attached to the University of Milan and handles only industrial cases. For Italy this Clinic seems to be fairly good, certainly far better than anything else we had seen. Dr. Preti was willing to take over the responsibility of all our medical work in Italy, the fees he suggested, however, in a later discussion with myself were unreasonably high amounting to something like 60-80,000 Lira a year. This I think was partly due to the fact, that he had not a very clear idea of the amount of work involved. We have not developed matters further with Dr. Preti, since after the second talk with him the suggestion, I have referred to of Montecatini was put forward and it appeared at one time, as if we would have to clear out of Italy entirely. I would suggest that once we have this situation clear with Montecatini we develop matters further with Dr. Preti, (if we decide to remain in business in Italy) with a view of having him take over our medical work, this would enable us to dispense with the present medical consultants we have in Italy, who in my opinion are worse than useless.

The Health Department in Italy have to-day no control over the lead situation since as Dr. Machle probably explained to you this is entirely in the hands of the War Department who override anyone else.

You may remember that about two years ago a man called [REDACTED] employed by the Italo-Americana in their mixing plant at Monopoli complained of lead poisoning and although the evidence failed to indicate this, the man has not improved in health and in fact has steadily deteriorated. In recent months his condition has become serious and I suggested to the Italo-Americana that they send him to Dr. Preti for observation. I do not know if he has actually arrived in Milan as yet, since I believe that after it was agreed to send him they were unable to move him due to the fact that he was considered too ill. I fail to see that this man's illness has any connection with Ethyl Fluid, but undoubtedly there is something seriously wrong with him and I am hopeful that Dr. Preti will be able to discover what it is.

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TO Dr. Kehoe

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DATE 10th November, 1946.

I think this gives you a fairly clear picture of the present situation. Everything is not entirely as we would like it to be, but I believe that under the prevailing conditions, the health side is being fairly well taken care of, although we have not as close a control as we should like.

Should you have any suggestions to make to us as a result of Dr. Machle's visit or recent happenings in the United States, I should of course be delighted to receive them and would naturally use every effort to insure that they are carried out.

With all best wishes to Mrs. Kehoe and yourself.

Yours sincerely,



R. B. Swan

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