

Captain Kamal Balajiva,
Military Hospital,
Bangkok.

KE 0013317

July 20, 1940

Captain Kamal Balajiva, M.B.,
Military Hospital
Bangkok
Thailand

Dear Captain Balajiva:

A short time ago I received information by way of the London office of the Associated Ethyl Company Ltd., to the effect that you had agreed to carry on the medical supervision of workmen who would be engaged in mixing Ethyl Fluid with gasoline at the Government Fuel Department mixing plant in Chongnonsari. Shortly after this I talked with Mr. Allen Tully in this country after his return from Australia. You will probably remember Mr. Tully as the gentleman who interviewed you in connection with this work. Mr. Tully has reported that the construction of the contemplated mixing plant does not correspond with the specifications provided by the Associated Ethyl Company Ltd., and that it can not be approved for use unless changes are made in accordance with agreements entered into by the management of the plant. I wish to make quite clear to you that in my opinion it is not advisable for the Ethyl Company to assume any responsibility whatever for the operation of this plant and for the care of the workmen in it until and unless it is modified to correspond to our general methods for building and operating these plants. I would appreciate it very much if you would make such efforts as you can on behalf of the Ethyl Company to see that the management understands the gravity of this matter. The design of the plant and the construction of various safety features in connection with it are not matters of arbitrary judgment, but are rather dependent upon our experience over a period of many years on the handling of this occupation. It is necessary that every precaution be taken in the handling of the concentrated Fluid; otherwise it is practically certain that accidents will occur and that men will be poisoned. As a medical man you can not be indifferent to this situation. Obviously if men are injured in this work, you may find it necessary to take care of them. On the

KE 0013318

other hand we are quite certain from our experience that if the plant is properly built and properly operated, no cases of poisoning can possibly occur. Accordingly I do not wish to authorize you to undertake the supervision of men who are working in a plant that is obviously unsatisfactory. What I wish you to do is to see if you can not influence the people in question to build the plant and to operate it in accordance with our instructions. If they will not do this, we shall have to decide later what to do, but if you will let me know what takes place, keeping me fully informed of all developments, I shall know how to advise you.

Under separate cover I am sending you a series of published articles from this laboratory on various phases of the problem of Ethyl Fluid and leaded gasoline. As you will see from these articles, the gasoline after it is mixed is in no wise more dangerous than ordinary gasoline. The Fluid, however, is a dangerous material and must be handled with great respect.

Under the circumstances as they now exist at the plant in question, I would not wish you to undertake the examination of workmen in preparation for the mixing operations or after the mixing operations begin, unless, as I have indicated, the plant is rebuilt in accordance with our requirements. However I would like you to assume the responsibility for representing me in a medical way in negotiations with the officials of the Government Fuel Department, and I shall see that you properly compensated for any efforts which you are able to make in this way. If we find that we can go ahead with the regular medical supervision of the workmen, you will be compensated on a mutually agreeable basis through arrangements made out of the London office of the Associated Ethyl Company Ltd.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the London office for their information so that they will appreciate the instructions which I have given you.

I shall be very much pleased to hear from you, acknowledging the receipt of this letter and also the receipt of the published work which I am sending you. I shall be glad to answer any further questions which may be raised by you, if possible, and I shall especially

KE 0013319

look forward to information from you as to the status
of the plant in question.

Cordially yours,

AMM:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

cc Mr. Possett

KE 0013320