

February 27, 1963

Mr. Dick Thornburg
Editor
The Post and Times-Star
800 Broadway
Cincinnati 2, Ohio

Dear Mr. Thornburg:

I have read with concern the article which appeared in The Post and Times Star on February 26, 1963, relating to the work being carried on at the Kettering Laboratory in the Medical Center of the University, and to certain opinions of mine concerning some of the problems under investigation. Certain statements were attributed to me that resulted undoubtedly from the misunderstanding of remarks which I made during an interview last week.

I am especially concerned about a sentence which says: "Lead pollution is constantly spewed out by car exhausts to the point, in fact, where the lead content of air 'has just about reached saturation,' Dr. Kehoe said." Unfortunately this runs counter to the results of our work as published and as interpreted in public statements of mine. The meaning that was intended was that the lead in the atmosphere of cities derived from the exhausts of automobiles has just about reached a point beyond which it would not be expected to go, because of the near saturation point of city streets with automobile traffic. Actually the concentration of lead in the air of our cities is very low, and is insignificant, at present, from the aspect of public hazard. It is unlikely that it will reach a point of significance, but there are methods for following this matter in the future, so as to make certain that there will be no risk to the public.

There are a few other statements in the article which are erroneous in effect, in that they lay emphasis in the wrong place and by so doing distort the general meaning. I can well understand the difficulties that confront any writer in handling a highly complex technical subject which relates to industrial and public health.

In deference to the position of the Kettering Laboratory in its field of investigation, I would appreciate your printing this letter so as to set the record straight.

Sincerely yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.