

June 18, 1935

Dr. Graham Edgar
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York City
New York

Dear Dr. Edgar:

Some days ago I had a letter from Bevan reporting a case of supposed tetraethyl lead poisoning at the Monapoli plant of Italo-Americano in Italy. It seems that shortly after beginning a mix, the gasoline pump failed to operate and without any instructions from any one, the man in charge of the mixing hauled in a mechanic who was passing at that time. The latter without changing his clothes and without the use of a mask or gloves, spent about fifteen minutes repairing the pump. He felt alright immediately after but shortly after became ill, went home and went to bed, and for a number of days was ill. The extent of his illness can not be determined from the report of the local doctor and there is reason to believe that the man describes his illness with some hyperbole. In any case, after some three months he recovered to such a point as to be able to return to his work, then sickened again and was examined at that time by Professor Datto who is our chief consultant in Italy. This latter examination was conducted some seven months after the initial illness and as you might expect yielded very little information. Certain lead analyses were made at that time which are of interest only because they are either grossly inaccurate, or the samples have been contaminated thereby complicating the diagnostic picture. I have gone over the full report and have written Mr. Bevan and have prepared a memorandum analyzing the clinical report. Copies of my letter to Bevan and of the memorandum are enclosed herewith for the purpose of acquainting you with the circumstances. I have no way of telling whether anything further will come of it and I am concerned about it because of the violation of our regulations on the one hand, and the incompetence of our medical consultants on the other. Just what I shall be able to do about either of these things I am not quite clear, but I shall keep it in mind and shall try eventually to work out a more suitable type of medical supervision in Italy. I should appreciate very much any comments you may wish to make.

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