

August 28, 1946

Mr. J. H. Schaefer,
Ethyl Corporation,
Chrysler Building,
New York City 17.

Dear John:

Thanks very much for your expression of opinion on several matters referred to in your letter of August 14. My ideas on these subjects are somewhat tentative to be sure, but I agree with you in feeling that it is well to have some tentative basis for the consideration of future relationships.

KE 0001071

The purpose of this letter, however, is to resolve your anxiety in connection with the Chambers Works reports for the TEL area dated July 5. The situation which was the subject of the paragraph quoted in your letter, was due in large part to the contamination of the series of samples forwarded to us for analysis. From time to time the opportunity presents itself for a slight contamination of samples in the course of the analyses. Unfortunately such a circumstance occurred early in July when we analyzed a sample of sludge of such high lead content as to result in the contamination of one of our muffle furnaces and one or two silica dishes. The difficulty was not anticipated, and it was not recognized until certain samples of excreta of known low lead content were found to have yielded high results. Careful investigation disclosed the existence of the contamination, which unfortunately was not serious enough to give rise to obviously aberrant results. You will probably realize that in the examination of spot samples of blood and urine the introduction into the sample of a few micrograms of lead, or even a fraction of a microgram may result in serious error. We promptly obtained new samples and reviewed all of the results, and were promptly able to eliminate the flurry caused by the mistake. This is a most unusual situation, and one which merely illustrates the necessity for the most meticulous and continuous checking of all of the operations in the analytical laboratory. It so happens that the men whose removal was requested had been on the border line, so that no especially embarrassing situation was produced. Moreover Dr. Evans has assured me that the incident was beneficial on the whole in that it resulted in a complete review of a number of situations which had not been altogether to his liking. On the other hand, it is only just to point out that the condition in the plant was artificially emphasized.

Sincerely yours,

N 5730

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

ETHYL CORPORATION

MANUFACTURING AND TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY TO
CHRYSLER BUILDING
405 LEXINGTON AVE., NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

Personal

August 14, 1946

Dr. R. A. Kehoe,

Dear Bob:

I am very much obliged to you for your letter of July 31st and will comment in the order of the subjects mentioned.

In the first place, it is certainly gratifying to know that you find conditions at Baton Rouge fairly satisfactory. We all know that there is a large amount of room for improvement but as long as we are making progress, we have hope. I am, in turn, gratified at the work that the Air Contamination Committee is doing under your chairmanship and I think this is contributing substantially to the improvement and progress of hygienic conditions. I would indeed be very much interested in getting your detailed report on the last trip that you made to Baton Rouge and will await its receipt. Meanwhile, however, in going over the July 5th Chambers Works report for the T.E.L. Area, I find the following which gives me some concern and I quote it herewith in the event that you are not altogether aware of the situation:

Review

"The Area supervision has been greatly concerned with the health picture of the employees during the month. Suddenly on about June 15, 1946, reports of urine analyses for lead were all at a higher level with some of them in an alarming range. No definite Area-wide correlation of contamination was found, nor was there clinical evidence reported by the Medical Department to correspond to the high excretion results. The Area was thoroughly canvassed for sources of contamination and corrective measures were applied. A large number of special urine samples were collected for analysis and the laboratories were asked to review their procedures. Further, as noted above, the Medical Department requested removal of six employees on a K.O.A. basis."

KE 0001072

With reference to your professional relationship to Ethyl, Associated Ethyl and duPont, I can certainly find no quarrel with the position you have taken. I think it is a sound one as far as you are concerned. To have your fully expressed views on the subject will be helpful in shaping up the whole program for the future. Undoubtedly we will have some discussion with duPont in the near future during which this subject will come up and, unless you have objections, I would like to quote you along the lines you have written me.

From a personal standpoint, I wish that the matter could be otherwise, toward the end that you would continue to be directly an "Ethyl" medical director, but I do see your point and I think we will have to go along that way.

Sincerely yours,

July 31, 1946.

Mr. J. H. Schaefer,
Ethyl Corporation,
Chrysler Building,
New York City 17.

Dear John:

I was sorry not to have had a chance to talk with you either in Baton Rouge or New York, for there are a number of matters we could have exchanged ideas on with some profit. As it happens I am getting away shortly for a holiday and will not be available until some time during the third week in August. Therefore, it seems wise to drop you a line on the point mentioned in your pencil note of several days ago.

First with reference to Baton Rouge, I find conditions generally fairly satisfactory. There are certain continuing sources of exposure, especially in the furnace and alloy areas, that have been commented upon previously and that will not lend themselves to solution until work now in progress has reached satisfactory conclusions. I hope I shall have time to prepare a brief memorandum on my survey on this last trip, and if so, this will be forwarded to you without additional comment. If I do not have time for this, my comment above will serve to give you my general attitude. There has been a decided improvement in point of view and performance at Baton Rouge. I think we are moving in the right direction, and that it will be possible to prevent relaxation of present efforts.

With reference to my professional relationship to Ethyl Corporation, du Pont, and Associated Ethyl, I have little to say beyond what I have pointed out previously. It is obvious that I shall not be able to spread myself over all of the administrative activities involved in this entire industry. Actually, I think that I shall have to withdraw more and more as time goes on from any other than an advisory relationship to Associated Ethyl. On the other hand, we shall have to put their medical house in order on a more or less permanent basis before I can give up my present responsibilities. With respect to Ethyl Corporation I think it will be possible to delegate responsibilities to various associates and assistants to the point where I shall not have to do more than to supervise the conduct of the necessary experimental work and to act in an advisory capacity on matters of policy and general hygienic principles and practice. I fully expect to have the manufacturing plant operating on its own responsibility in medical and hygienic matters. It is necessary and right that this should be the case. I think also the other work of the medical department can easily be divided up among my present

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medical associates in such a way that each handles his own problems with only the minimum amount of advice or direction from me. I have been working steadily in this direction. What remains is to find a person sufficiently interested and sufficiently young so as to succeed me in the acceptance of responsibility for the general all-over picture. My experience indicates that continued experimental work will be required and that some careful consideration of the over-all hygienic picture will have to be maintained. This, so far as I can see, can only be done by a person who has an opportunity as I have, to put his finger into the situation here and there and everywhere, while at the same time being sufficiently free of routine duties to maintain a familiarity with all aspects of the problem. My present feeling is that this can best be done by one who has the facilities of a research laboratory at his disposal, and who at the same time has competent medical assistants to carry on all the routine of the day's work. I have not thought this through as to the detail or organization, but I have a feeling that the position that this Laboratory occupies in relation to the tetraethyl industry, is one which might well be prolonged if not perpetuated. This is the point that gives me to feel that we could well serve as a source of advice and of hygienic control for the entire industry, including du Pont, if they should choose to enter on their own. I realize that this would be a very unusual set-up from the point of view of commercial operations. On the other hand, it is a little difficult for me to see how the various problems which will present themselves on a world-wide basis, can be handled without an interval of serious industrial and public risk, unless we occupy somewhat the same relationship to du Pont, or to any other large competitor, that we occupy to Ethyl Corporation. I am thinking here not at all of our own position, and the benefits or difficulties that will accrue to us. Rather I am thinking of the potential threat to the public health that is involved in the entrance of any other group into this field on a broad base. It is, of course, no secret to anyone, that by virtue of our associations of the past twenty years we have been enabled to gather together bit by bit the information and the background of experience that will enable us to have a fairly clear idea as to the significance of this, that or the other factor in relation to the problems of industrial health that are related to this industry. In the professional sense such a background of knowledge and experience becomes in considerable measure public property. Consequently I cannot dissociate myself from the feeling of responsibility for the impact of this industry upon the community in the matters related to health. That may be a very naive point of view, so far as commercial matters go, but I cannot escape the feeling that it is more realistic than would be the attitude of unconcern toward what another unit of the industry might bring upon us. In any case, I think that this policy is well worth consideration, and that it should not be discarded lightly on the basis of certain legalistic and conventional viewpoints. I am quite sure that we could establish a position of professional independence, whereby

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we could act as hygienic consultants for the industry as a whole without being involved in any way in the competitive aspects of the situation. I am frank to say that this would give me a good deal of occasion for regret, from the aspect of close personal relationships that have existed between myself and a number of Ethyl Corporation executives and technical staff. I have been personally gratified and professionally proud of my associations inside the family so-to-speak. I cannot but feel, however, that professional responsibilities have a much broader importance than personal partisan feelings, and therefore I should be quite willing to submerge my pride in being a part of the organization of Ethyl Corporation in my professional responsibilities. I trust that this conveys my general idea, the details of which no doubt will require careful examination.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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P. S.: Obviously if the above arrangement were to be effected, the medical men participating in actual medical services should be paid on the basis of services rendered, while the Laboratory would be supported jointly but in accord with the contribution made to the investigative program by the individual organization. Under these circumstances I would probably regard my contribution as made on behalf of the Laboratory rather than as a private medical consultant. The entire work would be coordinated for hygienic purposes by the Laboratory. This would eliminate me from any employee relationship to Ethyl, but would leave me in advisory relationship to the entire industry.

KE 0001075