

February 11, 1969

P.S.I. Barry, M.D.
The Associated Octel Company Limited
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
England

Dear Pat:

I am not entirely sure of the status of my correspondence with you, but I am sure that I have left several unfinished matters until a convenient time for writing. My uncertainty arises from my absence from my office for all but a few days since December 17. Lucile and I got out of Cincinnati at that time and established ourselves in a friend's unused apartment in Palm Beach and thereby missed a period of very bad weather in Cincinnati. Lucile has gained ground rapidly, and is in good spirits.

While we were there, the opportunity opened up to take over an apartment at the address indicated above, and because our time in Florida ran out and, also because we had tried unsuccessfully to find a suitable place (at the right time) in San Francisco previously, we welcomed the opportunity and came out here, Lucile on the 22nd and I on the 26th of January. The few days spent in Cincinnati enabled me to do some necessary things, including the collection of different clothes (since Florida is mostly hot and San Francisco, while not cold, is a bit brisk at this time of year. It has rained at some time on nearly every day since we have been here, but we have escaped more cold weather in Cincinnati. (Incidentally, we will be back in Cincinnati by the end of March.)

With this period out of my office, I am a bit out of step, but I have managed to do a great deal of useful work, including an intense stint of reviewing the literature on lead of the past six years (with somewhat less thorough examination of some of the older literature). Several jobs of writing (and speaking) have to be done, and the period of relative freedom from unexpected tasks day by day, has given me a chance to get at main jobs.

One of the "day by day tasks" that came up shortly after my return from London, was a request from Dr. Lane to put something together for him on the "Patterson affair" and the "Three Cities Survey," so that he could reply more effectively to the attack made on the Statement on the diagnosis of industrial lead poisoning in the British Medical Journal in November of 1968. This was an article which he and several others, including you and myself, signed. This was a stupid attack, and I did my best to make this apparent in appropriate (I hope) language. Your mention of this and the Greek episode, and the attachments to your letter were helpful. The article by Anthony Tucker in the Manchester Guardian is no great credit to this usually reliable newspaper.

I remember that I promised to send you a memorandum on the question of an appropriate standard for lead as it issues from your projected stack and contaminates the air at ground level in the neighborhood outside of the premises of the plant. The memo is tardy, but since I expressed my views to you, it may be useful to have these in writing. Therefore, I attach a brief memo.

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I'm pleased to know that you will be attending the Symposium on Air Quality, sponsored by the Industrial and Engineering Section of the American Chemical Society in Minneapolis in April. I'll be glad to see you there. The I.M.A. will be holding its annual meeting in Houston on April 21 - 24, and you would find it interesting to be there too, if it is possible. As a further inducement, I might tell you that I am giving the Sappington Memorial Lecture on Thursday of that week, and also, the Kettering Alumni will be having a luncheon there during the sessions, probably on Wednesday.

And now, I am raising a question of you, for your consideration, and that of your people at 20 Berkeley Square if you so choose, and for your advice to me personally. I am planning, with Lucile, to go to the Sixteenth International Congress on Occupational Health in Tokyo, and it has occurred to me (and I'm looking into the transportation problems, which are a bit difficult unless we fly) that it may be my best, and perhaps my only logical, opportunity to get to Australia. Some years ago, I was urged by several colleagues there, and by several Associated Ethyl (Octel) people in London and Australia, to visit Australia. It was not at all urgent from the aspect of Associated Ethyl, and I took this to be mainly courtesy on the part of Mr. Bevan and his London associates. I did not think it was urgent from the aspect of our (at that time, my) associates in Australia. I can see no such urgency - even less - now, but it may be that your medical and hygienic group there would be pleased to have me visit them. For my part, I'd like to meet and talk with Kieth Fairley, whom I have respected at a distance, and there might be some usefulness in my visiting them. On the other hand, this might be an inconvenient time for your people, and the long lapse in our correspondence and other relationships may well have greatly attenuated their interest. I would appreciate it greatly if you would sound out the situation, and let me know, with the utmost frankness, just what might come of such a visit. Let us be quite clear on this. The last thing in the world that I want is to presume upon past professional and company concerns. On the other hand, it might be a trifle gauche of me to visit Australia and ignore completely the relationships that have existed in the past, if indeed, such relationships exist in the minds of our colleagues and friends there. I want to be neither presumptuous nor indifferent.

I think it likely that we will visit Australia in any case - that is, with or without the sponsorship, in some degree, of my one-time medical associates there. There is no doubt, however, that I would be glad to meet and talk with some of your people, and to make myself available for a talk or lecture or any other type of medical meeting. There is, let me say clearly, no need or usefulness in any subsidization of our expense. I am not being quixotic when I say that I would not wish this to be any factor in your inquiry. I am simply asking for your advice as a friend on the inside of the situation, as to whether we should make a casual professional approach to your people when we arrive there, or whether advance notice of our visit would be a courtesy that would enable mutually desirable, professional arrangements to be made. You and I are on such terms as will enable you to suggest to me what you believe I should do, after finding out how the land lays. I'd be glad, too, of any suggestions which your people there would have as to where we should go, what we should do, and whom we should see, if it is appropriate to make some professional visits. We shall arrange our trip with the help of a friend, who is a knowledgeable travel agent in San Jose, whom we shall visit there soon. This is not, therefore,

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a question of transportation or accommodations although there is time, I believe, for such advice as might be of considerable importance to us. As you know, we are fairly good travelers, but we know virtually nothing about Australia and New Zealand, except for what we have read and learned by conversation with your people.

Please don't take my call upon you too seriously. Just do for me what seems appropriate and easy, and let me know, in due course, what you think.

With best regards to your Anne and the children,

Sincerely,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

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enclosure

P.S. You might also tell me when you reply where Mr. Bevan is and where he can be reached by mail.

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