

February 16, 1943

AIR MAIL

Mr. C. L. Risso-Gill,
Paseo Colon 285,
Buenos Aires,
Argentina.

Dear Charlie:

Thanks very much for your two letters of January 12, with their enclosures. I had a letter from Dr. Ottolina about the Venezuelan decree, and I am very glad to have a copy of it. Under the circumstances, I think you and he have done very well and that you should be congratulated on working this out with the patience that is necessary.

I have not had time to go over the regulations issued by the Standard Oil Company for cleaning the tank vessels. Actually, we went over this with them some time ago, and I am very glad to know just what use they made of our information and point of view. Accordingly, I shall study the regulations quite carefully, and I may have occasion to take up certain aspects of the matter with you later. For the present, I am so swamped with things that have to be done that I shall have to allow this matter to ride for a little while.

There is another point of practical importance which I ought to call to your attention, since it is giving rise to some difficulties elsewhere. I refer here to the use of leaded gasoline in stoves and blow torches that have been designed for the use of unleaded fuel. I should appreciate it if you would let me know when and where you run into this problem. I hope it will not be a troublesome one in South America, and I can see no reason why it should be. It is giving us trouble, especially in connection with groups of armed forces. It is a serious problem, both from the point of view of the proper operation of the equipment and from the possibility of hazardous lead exposure. I think I have mentioned this before, and you are probably familiar with it, but it is worth while to point out that the combustion products of leaded gasoline are comparatively rich in finely divided lead compounds which may be deposited in considerable quantity on the parts of the burner, on cooking utensils, and also in the food. Also significant quantities may be found

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in the effluent stream of air above the burners, and if these are not removed by a proper flue and by adequate ventilation, the concentrations may undoubtedly reach dangerous levels for repeated and more or less prolonged exposure. The solution of this problem under ordinary conditions is to provide unleaded gasoline as fuel. We have done everything we can to promote this solution, but under the present conditions of transportation and military use, the supply of unleaded gasoline has not been adequate everywhere. You may run into this in South America. If you do, I should like you to let me know about it. Moreover, if you can help in any way by encouraging the distribution of adequate quantities of unleaded gasoline, you should do so. The distributing companies should be familiar with this problem, since if they do not take advantage of their opportunities for avoiding difficulties, they are certain to have trouble along this line.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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