

July 11, 1966

Mr. B. W. Merwin, Chairman
Research Committee
The United States Potters Association
East Liverpool, Ohio 43920

Dear Mr. Merwin:

I am most appreciative of your letter of July 7, not only because of its enclosure of interesting information, but also because of its thoughtfulness and courtesy. I would not have been surprised, nor would I have the right to be offended, if you, as well as your associates, had marked me off your list of persons worthy of your kind consideration. It would seem that I had forgotten my participation in a pleasurable and purposeful association.

The fact is that this is by no means the case. I have been frustrated in the completion of my end of the bargain by a series of circumstances that have appeared to be almost, if perhaps not quite, unavoidable. The last and most troublesome factor in my default should have been only a brief tempest in a teapot. Instead, it was transformed into a crucial situation that has occupied most of my time, almost to the exclusion of other significant efforts, since last November, when I returned from a special mission in Chile. You may or may not have been aware of this matter, but it has had serious potentialities for the disruption of many of the technological uses of lead, as these may affect its distribution in the human environment, generally as well as the employment of lead in gasoline as an antiknock agent.

In addition, I was under attack, both directly and covertly, as being a pawn of industry, and the potential effect of this on certain policies and plans of the Kettering Laboratory, as well as the associations of scientists generally, with industry and industrial managers, was considerable. I believe these matters have been settled for a time, but I believe they are merely quiescent, and will recur. This problem, in my view, is a serious one for the future. Not that it will affect me greatly, but rather that the controversy created here by a man from the California Institute of Technology, a geochemist, Claire Patterson, Ph.D., and abetted by quite a number of inconsequential people plus a number who should know better, is quite capable of poisoning the scientific atmosphere that is so essential in our time for dealing with the many problems of occupational and environmental health.

With the above considerations in mind, I have spent an unconscionable amount of time and effort in participating in this controversy. It is now behind me, for a time, and I hope, vigorously, that after a vacation trip in Montana, and a trip abroad to the XV International Congress on Occupational Health in Vienna, I shall be able to get back to the work I have neglected.

With further thanks for your courtesy, and best wishes for the continued progress of your work, I am,