

November 3, 1936

Dr. Florent Coste
41 Rue Cardinet
Paris - 8E
France

Dear Dr. Coste:

When my associate, Dr. Machle, was abroad recently, he had the misfortune to miss seeing you since you were out of Paris during the period he was there. He was rather anxious to see you and talk over with you one problem which has troubled us for some time, and which has recently become rather acute in this country. I refer to the dangers associated with the cleaning of tanks which have contained leaded gasoline over a period of months or years. From time to time we have had cases of poisoning in this country as the result of the use of certain methods of cleaning. We have come to recognize the fact that the oil companies themselves do not always take the precautions which are advised in our book of regulations (Section 5). Dr. Machle was anxious to do what could be done to reduce the danger of this work in the French refineries. Therefore he urged that wherever it was possible, this work should be done by the men engaged in the blending operations who could be counted on to take the necessary precautions. He wanted to talk this matter over with you in order that you might look into the matter on your regular visits to the refineries, and lend your influence in this direction.

I am writing you specifically on the matter because we have recently had a recurrence of some of our former difficulties. It is apparent that the cleaning of these tanks is an hazardous occupation and that the men must be protected both with proper clothing and also, more importantly, by the use of masks during the entire period in which they are inside the tanks. I have written Mr. Bevan and I have suggested that he discuss the matter with Mr. Thenault in order that the distributing companies be warned to exercise great care in putting into effect the precautionary regulations. I have considered it advisable to call the matter to your attention further in order to get this additional check on carelessness. I urge you, therefore, to do what you can in the course of your visits to the refineries to bring this matter to their attention, and to see to it

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Dr. Coste (cont)

that they are aware of the necessities for care.

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of a book in which I have collected most of the papers which relate to our clinical and experimental study of the question of leaded gasoline. I hope you will find this book of some convenience to you in assembling the available data on this subject. Incidentally if you have any of my papers on hand and if you do not need them further, I would suggest that you refer them to me. I am particularly anxious to obtain a few copies of the series of articles on normal lead etc. which appeared in the Journal of Industrial Hygiene for September 1933. My supply of reprints of these articles has been exhausted and there is still a demand for them. This is equally true of the two articles on "An Appraisal of the Lead Hazards Associated with the Distribution and Use of Gasoline Containing Tetraethyl Lead. Part I and II". I do not want to take any of these away from you if you wish to keep them, but if you are not interested in keeping them in view of the volume which I am sending you, I would be very glad to have them back.

If there are any new developments in France, I should be very happy to hear from you about them, and in any case I would be pleased to hear from you from time to time.

With kindest personal regards,

Cordially yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

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