

April 16, 1940

Dr. Carlos Ottolina
Municipal A Reducto 64
Caracas, Venezuela

Dear Doctor Ottolina:

I regret very much my tardiness in replying to your several letters. Unfortunately I have had to be out of my office a great deal of late and have been very much pressed for time when I have been in my office. Therefore I have had to let my correspondence suffer.

Let me first reply to your questions about Mr. Roberts. I quite agree with you that you should be able to keep in touch with him from time to time. Unfortunately for that purpose Mr. Roberts has been in the United States for the past six weeks or two months. I have seen him only once and that just prior to the receipt of your letter. It was impossible, therefore, for you to communicate with him and I have not had the means of talking with him further about your problems since he was in various parts of the United States and was difficult to reach. In this connection, however, I should say that the general question of your medical supervision of the workmen should have been covered in your conversations with him and in my previous correspondence with you. I had felt that the instructions in the memorandum which I sent to you on this subject were sufficiently precise. It is understood that the men who will be engaged in mixing operations should be examined by you before they begin their work. It is also understood that these men should be examined with whatever frequency is required by the regulations of the Ministry of Health of your country. It is, therefore, your duty to see that their requirements are complied with. From my point of view examinations once every three months are quite sufficient but, on the other hand, if governmental regulations in your country require that the examinations be done more frequently, this should be done. It is our purpose to see that you are properly compensated for the work of this kind which you do, and, therefore, if more work is required of you than you originally anticipated, it is fully understood that you will make such arrangements with Mr. Roberts as will see to it that you are properly compensated. You need have no anxiety about this end of the work. Accordingly if additional necessity for work arises before you have had time to discuss the matter

with Mr. Roberts, you should do the work first as it should be done, and subsequently take up with him the question of adequate compensation. Mr. Roberts will properly pass along to me such matters for my recommendation and you may be assured that I will see that you are not at a disadvantage in this matter.

As to your medical reports, these need not be made to the Ministry of Health unless the Ministry of Health require it. If my memory is correct, there is some requirement in this respect in the regulations adopted by the Ministry of Health. It is our purpose to comply fully with all of the regulations of your country, and if they wish to have copies of your reports, you should send them to them.

It will not be necessary for you to send to me copies of your examination records. I shall take it for granted that you will examine the men carefully, that you will keep your own records very complete and that you will satisfy yourself that you have all of the necessary clinical information on these men in accordance with my instructions, and in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health. It will be necessary for you to inform the management of the refineries as to the fitness or unfitness of the men that you examine so that they will know definitely who is to be used in this work and who is not. I am not quite certain in my own mind as to just what record Mr. Roberts will wish to have sent him for filing in connection with your examinations. It is my belief that he will merely wish you to notify him that you have examined the men and that they are fit or unfit for the work as required. I suggest that you communicate with him, when it is convenient, so as to satisfy his requirements. Incidentally Mr. Roberts is now on his way back to South America by ship and can be reached eventually if you will address him at Casilla de Correo No. 1704 - Buenos Aires, Argentina.

As your letter of March 26th indicates, you are fully aware that you should not take part in any discussion which has to do with commercial aspects of the distribution of leaded gasoline. Such matters may best be referred to Mr. Roberts, but as medical men we must see to it that we do not get involved in questions and arguments over commercial matters.

In your letter of February the question was raised concerning the frequency of mixing operations at any one plant. These matters are covered in complete detail in the regulations issued concerning the mixing of Ethyl Fluid with gasoline as supplied to the distributors. You have a copy of these regulations which have been issued over my name and you will find that it is limited to six per month. I suggest that you review these regulations carefully

and that you be fully familiar with all the details. They are expected to give all of the instructions which are required for the operation of these plants.

Replying specifically to your letter of April 8th, the samples of excreta of the workmen should be obtained in accordance with the instructions which I sent to you and to the management of the refineries. When they have been obtained, they should be sent to us by freight on shipboard. It would be unduly costly and unnecessarily costly to send them by air. Of course they will be delayed in their arrival here, but I think we need not be unduly concerned by that, especially since the Ministry of Health has agreed to suspend the requirements for this kind of work. We shall make the analyses from time to time as the samples are received, and we shall be glad to report them to you and to the Ministry of Health. I believe this should be ample for their purposes.

By this time no doubt you have examined the men at the mixing plant at Caripito. These men should certainly be examined before they start to work and at proper intervals thereafter.

I trust this will give you the information you require and I sincerely hope I shall be able to be more prompt in my replies in the future.

Sincerely yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.