January 14, 1943

AIR MAIL

Mr. C. L. Risso-Gill,
The Associated Ethyl Company, Ltd.,
Paseo Colon, 285,
Buenos Aires,
Argentina.

Dear Charlie:

I am not at all surprised at the contents of your letter of December 23. It is quite to be expected that there would be difficulties in keeping mixing operations within normal limits. This is an emergency situation, and we shall simply have to do the best that we can. However, I do want to give you my general views on the whole problem.

In general, I have been opposed to the use of two or more sets of mixing operators at an individual plant, since this merely increases the number of persons exposed and decreases to some degree, the responsibility of a given man for the strict maintenance of the plant and for following the regulations precisely. The general purpose of limiting the number of mixes to a specific number was to make it necessary to enlarge the equipment in keeping with any increases in commercial operations. To illustrate what I mean, - a very small plant consisting of a small storage space and a small mixing tank, may be very satisfactory at the start. However, if the volume of gasoline needed increases, the storage space should be enlarged and the tankage should be adequate to furnish approximately a week's supply of gasoline. If the attempt is made to continue expanded operations with the small equipment, it may be necessary to mix every day or two. We have watched this and have insisted that the tankage be adequate for the commercial operations at all times. You will see, of course, that this general purpose is defeated if one simply looks at it from the point of view of frequency of mixing on the part of an individual man. If one meets this situation by supplying first one and then another extra set of mixing men, the plant remains unchanged and the exposure involves an increasing number of men. We shall probably be able to do very little about this at present, and yet I would not want the refinery management to get the idea that they can solve this problem merely by increasing the mixing personnel. Therefore, if I were you, I should proceed cautiously with this idea, lest it become a more or less standard technique for meeting the problem. Under normal conditions this problem

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should be met in only one way, - that is, by adapting the equipment to the commercial needs.

I should like to stress one further point. Regardless of the frequency of mixing, there will be little or no risk to the individual man so long as the mixing plants are kept in perfect order and so long as the men follow the regulations religously. These are the points that need to be stressed. With these reservations I am quite in agreement with your proposal for handling the problem during the persent difficult period. With respect to the frequency of examination of the men by a physician, your point of view is entirely correct. When it is feasible to do so, the men should be examined more frequently, and the plants and equipment should be looked after more carefully.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes for a good New Year from both Lucile and myself. I saw Les Roberts about ten days ago, and he sent his greetings to you.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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