

Since I have to keep a complete file of all available information and all of these potential medico-legal cases, and am held personally responsible for them and for any testimony that may be required - as long as I am available - I have rewritten the letter to express my and me in my own words. There is not intended as a criticism, although the first sentence of the second paragraph would put me in a somewhat unfavorable position with a clever attorney; but rather to forestall that I have been asked not to delegate

e 6, 1957

sed to Ethyl Corporation, has come to me, as

ining tetraethyl lead at filling stations, ⁱⁿ bulk never caused any cases of lead poisoning, the periods of its use. There were cases of poisoning among men engaged in the manufacture of tetraethyl lead during the early period of the development of manufacturing processes, and there was a time when such cases occurred in connection with the cleaning and repairing of large gasoline storage tanks, (in which the type of exposure is totally different). It is these cases that have been responsible for the idea, which still exists in some parts of the country, that the ordinary handling of gasoline is dangerous from the aspect of its lead content. The truth of the matter is that this problem was investigated very extensively in the early days of the use of leaded gasoline, and it was shown that no such danger existed under ordinary circumstances. The reason back of this safety is that the lead content of the gasoline is so low that, (1) there is no measurable absorption of lead during contact of the gasoline with the skin, and (2) the vapor given off from gasoline in open containers contains only negligible amounts of lead. It is for these reasons that leaded gasoline could be marketed, for if the facts had been otherwise, this type of gasoline could never have been used.

I am quite sure, therefore, that Mr. McElvain was not poisoned by tetraethyl lead and that the physicians at the Veterans' Hospital were correct in their opinion. It is of some importance, in this connection, to know that the absorption of lead in this form does not damage the peripheral nerves so as to produce a neuritis. At least, we have never seen a case of neuritis even in the cases that have been known to be due to the absorption of tetraethyl lead in large quantities in the operations to which I referred previously.

The report of the finding of lead in your husband's urine "at the upper limits of normal" tends in itself (dependent upon how and where the analyses were

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Q.K

June 6, 1957

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Elvain:

Letter of May 28, addressed to Ethyl Corporation, has con-
tained Director, for reply.

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