

December 21, 1970

Mr. Bill Glavin, Associate Editor
The Better Way
Good Housekeeping
959 Eighth Avenue
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Glavin:

I have examined your brief article, which, in my opinion is a fair statement of the situation at present.

In the interest of accuracy, however, certain alterations should be made. I have introduced only one necessary change in the manuscript, but, rather, have indicated below some points which should be considered. The information provided thereby will enable you to make additional changes if you choose.

In line 2 of the 2nd paragraph on page 2, you refer to what is, by all odds, the most unlikely clinical outcome of exposure to lead. Lead encephalopathy, and damage to the brain as a sequel thereof, results (20, far as is now known) from only the most severe types of exposure to lead. While it might be possible that many years of exposure to lead at a very low level - that is to lead in the ambient air at considerably increased concentrations above the present levels, over a lifetime, could damage the brain, with fatal results, without even having induced acute illness, This has never been known to occur, and is merely a supposedly possible occurrence, because of the lack of evidence to the contrary. I would advise your changing the expression "brain damage and death," which is an extravagant and dramatic supposition of what might be possible, to simple "lead poisoning."

As to my insert "former," this is merely factual. I founded the Kettering Laboratory in 1930 (when I was Assistant Professor of Physiology, having found the money for the purpose), because of the lack of such facilities in the U.S.A. in that period of actual and developing need for the study of the hygienic aspects of our technologic developments. I retired as its Director in 1964(actually in 1965), at which time I became Professor Emeritus of Occupational Medicine. I continued since that time my work in the Laboratory as an investigator and teacher (by invitation). The work on lead at that time having concerned itself, generally, with the metabolism of lead in man, had undertaken to find out the highest tolerable level of lead for man, in the ambient air, on the background of the present environmental situation, involving lead in food and beverages and at a low concentration in the air (in Cincinnati this is about 1.5 micrograms of lead per cubic meter of air. The work on this matter has indicated that this level is somewhere near the average value of 10 micrograms per cubic meter of air, which is about four times the highest annual average concentration found at this time in any American city.

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I do not expect you to incorporate these items of information into your article. What is said about the tolerable limit is for the purpose of showing you that what I've said about the safety of the present situation is not just "opinion" alone, but opinion based on evidence. The evidence may not be accepted by some people, and certainly not by those who are "convinced" to the contrary, but it will be there to be pondered by thoughtful people from now on.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

RAK:wb

OD HOUSEKEEPING

eighth avenue/new york, n. y. 10019 / editorial department

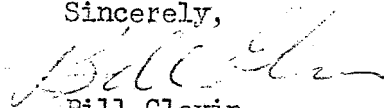
December 18, 1970

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

The story we discussed on the telephone is enclosed. As I mentioned at that time, it would be a great help to me if you could read it over and note, in the margins, any mistakes. Also, as you can see, space considerations forced me to eliminate some aspects of the story.

Thank you very much for your information and your help.

Sincerely,



Bill Glavin
Associate Editor
The Better Way