



Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta GA 30333

May 23, 1991

Arnold P. Wendroff, Ph.D.
298 Marlborough Road
Brookline, New York 11226

Dear Dr. Wendroff:

Your letter of February 20 to Dr. Sullivan has been forwarded to our office for reply. Of course, we are familiar with your work and interest in mercury poisoning; I will try to bring you up to date on relevant CDC activities.

New York: Dr. Susan Blank, with the New York Health Dept, reports that their office is planning an educational program which would target the communities most likely to practice Santeria. They plan to test when the protocol has been finalized.

Atlanta: This summer we will have a new employee in our department; we plan to offer her a project pursuing Hg exposure in the hispanic community either here or in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico: In July an Epidemic Intelligence Officer from CDC will be stationed in Puerto Rico. We plan to propose that this person pursue Hg exposures in the community.

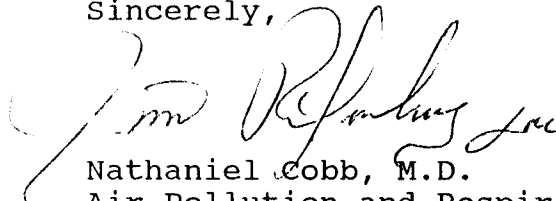
I am currently working on a CCEHRP (Committee to Coordinate Environmental Health and Related Programs) subcommittee evaluating the health risk of mercury in dental amalgams. I will ask other committee members (representing NIOSH, NIEHS, NIDR, EPA, ATSDR and other governmental agencies) what they know about this and whether other agencies might be interested in pursuing it further.

As you are no doubt aware, it's hard to get a fireman's attention without smoke or flames. You have convincingly presented a case for the uncontrolled presence of a dangerous material, but without an "index case" of mercury poisoning, a coordinated national effort to change the religious practices of a group might be met with considerable skepticism and

Page 2 - Dr. Arnold P. Wendroff

resistance. I am hopeful that by the end of this summer we will have a viable project underway which could at least validate the existence of a health problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nathaniel Cobb, M.D.", written in dark ink.

Nathaniel Cobb, M.D.
Air Pollution and Respiratory
Health Activity
Division of Environmental Hazards
and Health Effects
Center for Environmental Health
and Injury Control