Written by
Mr. Tegner

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At an interview with Mr. Oscar Buttermann* in his office, 16 Rue de Jesus, Antwerp, on November 17th, the question of Comprethyl was discussed.

Mr. Buttermann said that Comprethyl was covered by a patent, No. 22.838 taken out in Belgium on the 3rd of September 1939; and also by patents taken out in France.

Mr. Buttermann affirmed that his solicitors had investigated the patent situation and were of the opinion that the rights to which Ethyl Export Corporation were sole licensees were not infringed by the activities of Betco or Compromat, although Comprethyl did in fact contain a compound of lead.

Mr. Buttermann stated that he had a definite agreement with the Mexican Government through Davis on the following lines. Betco to supply 100,000 (one hundred thousand) kilos of Comprethyl per annum for a period of five years. The price the first year would be $3.80 (three and eight tenths U.S.dollars), the second year $2.40, the third, fourth and fifth year $2.20 per kilo, f.o.b Antwerp. Davis agreed also to bear the cost of any litigation in which Betco or Compromat might be involved through the manufacture or sale of Comprethyl.

Mr. Buttermann also alleged that some of the quantities above specified would be delivered to Hamburg, where tankers were being fitted out to blend gasoline with Comprethyl.

It was not made entirely clear during the discussion whether Betco or Compromat were manufacturing Comprethyl in quantity as yet, or whether the manufacture was still in a quasi laboratory stage.

Mr. Buttermann stated that he estimated the production cost of Comprethyl would be in the neighbourhood of $1.50 per kilo.

Mr. Buttermann then made a tentative offer to Ethyl Export Corporation for the sale of the patents of Comprethyl, the manufacturing rights, the existing plant and a guarantee not to engage in a similar undertaking in any country in future, for the following payment. Betco or Mr. Buttermann to receive an initial payment of £20,000 (sterling) and £5,000 per annum for five years. If Ethyl Export Corporation were inclined to consider this offer, a sample of Comprethyl would be supplied, on the guarantee by Ethyl Export Corporation that such sample would not be used in connection with any litigation that might subsequently involve Mr. Buttermann, Betco or Compromat.

In summary one would suppose that Mr. Buttermann is not entirely satisfied about either the manufacture of Comprethyl or the outcome of a law suit regarding the patent situation. On the other hand he feels that his agreement with Davis or the Mexican Government safeguards his own position and furnishes him with a very satisfactory financial gain. He is anxious to obtain the maximum profit with the minimum effort, from his transactions and feels that his moral obligations to Davis or the Mexican Government can be satisfactorily tended by an elastic conscience.

* A Director of Betco S.A which is affiliated to Compromat S.A.

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