

January 30, 1931

Mr. A. E. Mittnacht,
Ethyl Gasoline Corp.,
Chrysler Bldg.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Mittnacht:

As you probably know, I have been looking seriously into the question of Ethyl Aviation mixing, as well as the use of small cans. Another letter today indicates my approval of the cans lately designed where such cans are required.

There are two things which it occurs to me should be seen to with the utmost care in order to control both of these situations. One of these refers to the shipment of drums of Fluid. Several instances have come to my attention in which either small or large drums for aviation mixing have been shipped to some point where there is no adequate mixing equipment. This introduces at once the problem of what the management shall do to carry out mixing, and in at least one instance in my knowledge the crudest possible methods harking back to the stone ages of the Ethyl business have been used to accomplish the desired end. This of course, is a mistake. It should be an absolutely unbroken rule (and I would like to see this rule put into effect at once by proper instructions to Mr. Schaefer or any and all persons concerned with the matter) that no drum of any size shall ever be shipped to any point where there is not a completed or nearly completed adequate equipment for mixing. Mr. Schaefer should know all of the points at which mixing equipment is ready. He should know also the dates when an equipment may be expected to be ready when it is being newly installed, and he should be in position to hold up shipment of a drum or drums to a point where no equipment is in or almost ready for use.

In the matter of the small cans, it has also come to my attention that these have been found in the hands of racing men and others not authorized to possess them. As a consequence of this situation, which may never exist again and which certainly should not be allowed to exist, I should suggest the following regulation. That except as cans are shipped to experimental laboratories of the Corporation, and except for Army and Navy, no cans should be sent to any individual except properly designated representatives of the Ethyl Gasoline. This should mean that the division managers should be the only ones in their territory to have responsibility for ETHYL fluid. A reporting system should be inaugurated whereby these men acknowledge receipt for a certain number of these cans, information to be sent to me by the

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manufacturing plant on shipment and by the division manager on receipt, each can to be accounted for to me when it has been used in carrying out any proper activity of the Corporation's business. I recognize the necessity for the use of these cans. I recognize the advisability of the many courtesies which it is possible for the representatives of the Corporation to extend to various other individuals in industries. I recognize also the nuisance it will be to me to keep check of this matter, and yet I feel that it is a matter of such importance and that it has in it so many potential dangers, that I should like to be able to put my finger at any time on the number of cans that are out, in whose hands they are, and where they go. I am attempting to look after the safety matters for this Corporation. The one matter which involves a danger more than any other to date, I usually know little or nothing about. If anything went wrong so as to seriously effect the business and the good will of the Corporation in this regard, I would undoubtedly be held partly, perhaps largely, responsible. I believe the only alternative to such a system as I have very roughly outlined would be the complete discontinuance of the use of cans, except actually in the hands of employees of the Corporation.

I do not recommend this for immediate action. I suggest it as an idea which I have in mind, which it might be well for you to think over, and to which I will give some further thought. My idea is that there be some mechanism whereby I, who am more responsible than anyone else, should know just where these cans are going and to what use they are put. This is not a question of my lacking confidence in anyone. It is simply a question of my being unwilling to accept the responsibility for a matter unless I have the necessary information in my own hand on which to act.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJ

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