

December 28, 1931

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

Dear Mr. Mittnacht:

I have gone over your correspondence with Mr. Hewson in regard to the shipment of drums of aviation fluid to Whiting.

I can see their point, and I can appreciate the difficulties from your point of view, and yet I do not feel that the mere fact that the railroad will accept less than car load shipments is a justification for taking the risk. If our objection to the practise had been made on the grounds of purely theoretical risks there might be somewhat more point to the objection. However, we have already seen that the risk is more than an hypothetical one, and I do not feel that we can afford to shift the responsibility for this condition to the railroad company. Our only safety in these matters lies in anticipating and understanding dangers which we would hardly expect common carriers to appreciate since they do not have all of the information which is available to ourselves. To expose other people to dangers merely because they do not appreciate the dangers, would be as unethical as it would be short-sighted.

I know you appreciate the fact that we have been rather insistent that the Standard Oil Company of Indiana should discontinue the practise of making shipments or any other type of transportation, of small cans of fluid for the purpose of correcting mixes, etc. I regard the shipment of small drums as belonging in the same category of risks, though it is obviously not quite so great as that of transporting fluid in fragile containers. I am very much afraid, therefore, that I could not approve of local freight shipments of this sort. It would appear to me that any arrangement to satisfy the Indiana Company, if you feel it necessary to do so, would need to be of a business character. That is, it might be advisable to make some express adjustment arrangement. However, I do not presume to advise you on this point.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJT

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