

GRAM

From: Associated Ethyl
To: Ethyl Corporation

July 31 1943

(Following for Ethyl Corporation, Chrysler Building, New York, from T.R.A. Bevan, The Associated Ethyl Co. Limited).

With reference to Kehoe's letter to me of 22d May on the subject of transportation of Ethyl fluid on ships under existing conditions, we have just received a memorandum from Abadan, dated 21st June which contains the following very disturbing information.

FIRSTLY The vessel "John Armstrong" carried 1292 drums of Ethyl fluid stowed in the holds. On arrival at destination two empty drums were discovered, Nos. D-6741 and D8121. Abadan state that these drums had the appearance of having been punctured by some sharp instrument exerting great pressure on the drum sides and damage would appear to have been due to carelessness prior to or during loading.

SECONDLY At the date of their memorandum, namely 21st June, Abadan were unloading the vessel "W.A. Luckenbach", which carried 3000 drums of fluid in the holds. In the first 1000 drums discharged, 6 leakers and one empty drum were encountered in hatch No. 1, and one empty drum in hatch No. 7, and there were evident signs that other empty or damaged drums still remained in both holds. The 8 drums referred to above are F2173 F1823 F2043 F2992 F2507 F1830 F2403 F2178. F2054.

Abadan state that in their opinion damage was due to a combination of heavy weather and very poor stowage. On opening up the lower Hold in hatch No. 1, they observed several open spaces between drums and several drums in the top layer had fallen over. Working further down the Hold they found no attempt had been made to stow level right up to the ship's sides, the result that those drums on the outer edge were above the level of the inner drums making it extremely difficult and dangerous to discharge the cargo in its damaged condition.

Abadan conclude by stating that recent arrivals of Ethyl fluid have left much to be desired as regards general stowage and in view of the number of empty and leaking drums discharged, it has now become the practice for them to expect damage to each cargo.

We regard the position as serious in view of difficulty of adequate cleaning up spillage and decontaminating the hold, also by reason of the possible ill-effects to men unloading these vessels. We believe that Abadan take all possible precautions in accordance with our existing regulations and have agreed

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stressed the importance of this in a cable sent them today. We have requested the Petroleum Division to bring this matter to the attention of O B P R Washington, and suggest that they discuss with you with a view to arranging if at all possible that someone experienced in the handling and stowage of Ethyl fluid drums be present at the loading of each vessel, so as to reduce to a minimum the possibility of troubles similar to those already experienced at Abadan.

Would request that you pass copy of this cable to Kehoe and let me know at your earliest convenience what if any steps you are able to take from your end, and any suggestions you might have for additional precautions that might be taken at destination.

BRITISH CONSULATE GENERAL NEW YORK

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