

July 12, 1965

Dear Sir:

"Forget it, Heinz," the experts told me. "It just won't sell here."

They were talking about the Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel – a car that is owned and driven daily by over 500,000 people overseas.

"Americans won't buy it," said the experts. "Why pay \$4,068 for a German car with a noisy engine when for \$891.37 more they can get a Cadillac?"

I had reason to believe the experts were wrong. Some Americans have paid \$4,068 for this German car with the "noisy engine."

As a matter of fact, if it wasn't for the "noisy engine" many of these Americans wouldn't have found out about the car. While in Europe, they saw Mercedes-Benz Diesel cars and noticed the noise made by the engine. Fascinated, they asked questions.

And what they learned from European drivers up and down the high-speed Autobahns convinced them the Mercedes-Benz Diesel is a great car.

As for the noise, they found it does sound different from a gasoline engine. In fact, a few people may give the car a second look as you idle at a traffic light. But you won't be bothered by the sound above 25 miles per hour. Some 190D drivers report they actually enjoy the unique sound of the Diesel. Many owners tell me, "If it didn't make a little noise, people wouldn't know it's a Diesel!"

Mr. John J. Gray of Albany, Oregon is one of these owners. He travels all over the western U.S. for his firm, Kashfinder, Inc. In the past 7 years, he has driven his Mercedes-Benz Diesel car 652,000 miles.

"652,000 miles is a long ways to drive one car," writes Mr. Gray. "It has taken me 7 years -- during which my faithful Mercedes-Benz Diesel has run more efficiently and far more cheaply than any car I have ever owned. And the car still doesn't rattle..."

Recently, we asked other Mercedes-Benz Diesel car owners in "If you had it to do all over again, would you buy another of these automobiles?" Before I tell you their answers, I'd like to reveal what I learned from the U.S. Automobile Manufacturers Association.

I asked them how many Americans buy the same make and model of car they owned previously. They told me that fewer than four out of ten do.

Yet, when we asked our Mercedes-Benz Diesel car owners in America if they would buy another Mercedes-Benz Diesel, better than nine out of ten said YES. The experts were wrong about these Americans.

But one question remains unanswered for me. How many other Americans want a great motorcar? I'll soon know the answer.

You -- and a small number of others -- have been selected to receive the most unusual offer ever made by a car manufacturer. I will pay for all fuel, all motor oil, all oil filters, and all lubrications on the new Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel for the first 15,000 miles you drive it.

This offer is from Mercedes-Benz of North America. It is not from your Mercedes-Benz dealer. It will not affect your trade-in or terms in any way. I feel certain you will like this car and will help me spread the word about it. That's why I can offer you all fuel free. All motor oil free. All oil filters free. All lubrications free. All are yours free for the first 15,000 miles you own and drive your new Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel.

No other manufacturer of a full-size 4-door sedan in the entire world could afford to make this offer. I can make it because the Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel averages over 30 miles per gallon of diesel fuel -- and diesel fuel costs 1/3 less than gasoline in many states.

In fact, the 190 Diesel regularly saves its owners more than 50 per cent on fuel costs alone. And, like all Mercedes-Benz cars, the 190 Diesel is so finely machined it uses scarcely any motor oil. That's not all. The 190 Diesel never needs a tune-up. It has no carburetor to adjust or replace. No spark plugs, no points, no condensers, no distributor.

Mechanics will tell you that many cars need a new set of rings after 75,000 miles. John Gray -- the Diesel owner in Oregon -- reports his car didn't need a ring Job until after it had gone 275,000. Even crack mechanics are surprised by that. We build the Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel so that, with normal care, it will last for hundreds of thousands of all oil filters, and all lubrications for the first 15,000 miles you drive your new Mercedes-Benz 190 Diesel.

So please accept my invitation to drive a 190D and reach your own personal, private judgment. Simply return the enclosed card in the postage-free envelope. I will also send you a special brochure called "The Amazing 190D." My offer expires Monday, August 16, 1965, and is limited to the first 1,000 people who respond. I hope you take advantage of it. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Heinz C. Hoppe  
Chief Executive Officer