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## (54) Title: METHOD FOR REDUCING MERCAPTANS IN HYDROCARBONS

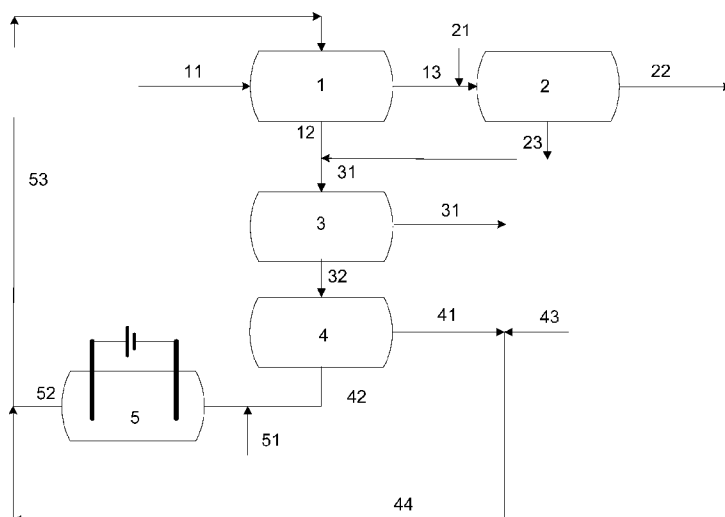


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A method for reducing mercaptan concentration in a crude oil is disclosed. The method comprises contacting the crude with a treating solution comprising a hypochlorite solution, whereby the mercaptan sulfur is oxidized and converted to at least one sulfur oxoacid or salt thereof, yielding a treated crude oil having less than 50 ppm mercaptan sulfur and residual chloride. The treated crude oil containing residual chloride is brought in contact with a caustic solution at a molar ratio of caustic to chloride of 0.05:1 to 1:1, generating an upgraded crude oil with less than 50 ppm chloride. In one embodiment, the spent treating solution is recycled to form a regenerated hypochlorite stream for use in the treatment solution.

**Declarations under Rule 4.17:**

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