cc: E. J. Bock
H. S. Bergen
E. V. John
W. B. Papageorge
P. S. Park
J. E. Springgate

May 28, 1970

Mr. Kevin Harris
Box 625B Donlon Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14850

Dear Mr. Harris:

I have been asked by Mr. Bock to reply to your letter in which you express your concern over the effect of polychlorinated biphenyls on the environment.

Firstly, let me make it very clear that Monsanto as a company is deeply concerned over the possible deterioration of the environment. For many years Monsanto has had a deep commitment to the control of possible pollution of the environment by exercising strict control over plant emissions. In the case of chlorinated biphenyls, the degree of control has been tightened following reports of build-up in the environment. Any contamination of the environment from this source can be described as infinitesimal and is certainly not a major factor in causing the problems you describe.

This company has developed a planned and detailed program to control the effects of the PCB's on our environment. Many of the uses of PCB's you describe are either small or have already been discontinued on a voluntary basis by Monsanto, e.g. we have recommended to the USDA that they refuse to register pesticide formulations containing chlorinated biphenyl as a carrier -- PCB's are not pesticides themselves.

Monsanto has and will continue to work closely with responsible government agencies in the control of PCB's and any other products which may be a threat to the environment. In addition, we are working closely with similar responsible organizations in Europe and other areas of the world.

From your letter I am sure that you have studied this problem closely and that your concern for the environment is genuine and very real. However, I would ask you to examine this problem from both sides, and try to establish a fair balance. Certainly if Monsanto and all other producers of PCB's stopped manufacture it would make a contribution to

solving the problem of environmental pollution, but what other problems would be created? The biggest usages for PCB's are as dielectric fluids in transformers and capacitors and in heat transfer fluids. Why? Because of their excellent fire resistance which over the past 30 years must have saved many hundreds, if not thousands, of human lives.

Monsanto recognises it has a responsibility to the environment, but also it has a responsibility to the population of the environment, including humans. We are thus approaching this problem in an extremely responsible manner, controlling and monitoring the use of PCB's, developing recycle and incinerator techniques to prevent escape to the environment, and aiming to balance the merits and problems of the PCB's in the best interests of the world population. I personally am convinced that this is the only responsible way to approach this and many of the other environmental problems the world is facing today.

Yours truly,

John Mason
Assistant General Manager

JM/gl