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time	verbatim transcript
8:18 a.m.	When Westinghouse opened a large manufacturing plant near Bloomington, Indiana, that community hailed the event as a boost to the area's economy. Today, Bloomington residents are pulling up that welcome mat, for nearly forty miles of nearby river and stream have been posted with signs warning that the fish there are unfit for human consumption. Farmlands have been poisoned and livestock, as well as crops, have been contaminated. Westinghouse has been identified by local officials as the polluter. Amid the waste deposited by the Bloomington plant, was a substantial amount of a toxic substance technically called a(polychlorinated biphenals), commonly referred to as PCB's. Now, they've been used in a wide range of products, including hydralic brake fluid, ironing board covers, and a vast array of electrical component parts. The sole producers of PCB's in this country, up until this year, has been St. Louis-based Monsanto Chemical. This year, Monsanto voluntarily ceased to produce PCB's. The reasons why, and the arguments that the company didn't act soon enough provide a real case study in the role of big business and the environment. Has Monsanto behaved responsibly where PCB's are concerned? That would depend upon whom you ask. First of all, it must be understood that environmental concern was not a major issue in this country until the sixties. On this, both Monsanto Chief Executive, John Hanley, and Washington University environmentalist, Barry Commoner agree. Hanley says you have to look at the role of business and the environment from a long range perspective. HANLEY: "In the ( ) of the span of history, it's pretty obvious that American industry - American society ignored the environment for the better part of two hundred years. And, as a result, we have an environment that's impure, both in terms of water and air and everything."

The above transcript has been edited for readability eliminating verbal hesitations. Unintelligible phrases are enclosed in parentheses. Proper names are spelled phonetically.

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8:18 a.m. Continued	HARDY: Now why was that allowed to happen? Because, acknowledges Commoner, until recently there was no public pressure to act otherwise. COMMONER: "It was okay to do it because people weren't aware that it was happening. Now I think people are very sensitive to the fact that they're breathing bad air and drinking polluted water." HARDY: According to Monsanto, the first signs of potential environmental problems with PCB's turned up in the late 1960's. Now remember that date. For at that time, about a thousand people in Japan became ill from eating rice oil heavily contaminated with Japaneese-produced PCB's. That happened after an undetected equipment leak allowed the chemical to spill into that oil. About the same time, a Swedish biologist identified PCB's in the bodies of fish. Following these incidents in 1971, Monsanto made a conscious decision to halt sales of PCB's to all customers except those using them in - quote - closed systems - unquote. And even then, they were shipped in special reenforced drums with a multi-lingual warning label affixed to each package. Monsanto Chief Hanley says he's proud of the company's record. HANLEY: "I think Monsanto, and you recall I wasn't here during much of that time, but I think Monsanto conducted themselves in a very responsible manner with regard to PCB's. As soon as they, or the scientific community determined anything negative about PCB's, the company moved to respond to that and to try to protect the environment against the ravages of PCB's. Now it turned out that we didn't know as much as we should, and you can criticize - the company can be criticized for its scientific voids - but it acted in a very respon-

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8:18 a.m. Continued	sible manner based on the information that it had." HARDY: Ecologist, Barry Commoner, disagrees. COMMONER: "We got a historical record. They knew. And I'll tell you how they knew. Because the original plant, which, I think was bought by Monsanto from a small manufacturer in Anniston, Alabama, in the early 1930's, I think it was thirty-three out of thirty-four workers in that plant showed symptoms of (Chloractic) a very severe disease, which is the first sign of the toxicity of PCB's. If the producers - if the company producing that material had paid more attention to the health of the workers, we would have been warned in the 1930's that this is very dangerous material. In fact, during World War II, the early 1940's, the New York State Department of Health investigated Chloractic among cable workers, who were laying cables inside liberty ships to demagnitize them. And they discovered the Chloractic disease that they had resulted from PCB in the insulation of the cables. And their report said people should not come in contact with PCB's." HARDY: We'll have more on the life, death and aftermath of PCB's after this. COMMERCIAL HARDY: Polycholinated biphenals, PCB's, most useful. But now determined to be very, very toxic. The only company making them in the United States - Monsanto - that is, up until not long ago when Monsanto voluntarily ceased to produce PCB's. Why? Well, that argument and the role of government in big business and environ-

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8:18 a.m. Continued	ment fitting all together, provide a beautiful case history of Principles and Profits. Barry Commoner says it's not enough for Monsanto to stop producing PCB's. Idealistically speaking, he says, the company should try to undo the environmental damage caused by the chemical. COMMONER: "I think so, but I think it's probably a responsibility that might bankrupt Monsanto. The fact that PCB's are now spread everywhere in the environment, in every living thing as far as we can tall from available measurements, is a responsibility that they, somehow, have to meet. The way things stand now, that responsibility, which was not met by Monsanto and, in fact, the production of PCB rendered them a good deal of profit, all of that difficulty is now (on) the burdens of the rest of us. It is now a burden that the rest of us is carrying." HARDY: Hanley of Monsanto replied this way: HANLEY: "It's an unfortunate event because there is no question but what the production of PCB's did harm to the environment. It was done unknowingly but that doesn't excuse it. It's unfortunate that it happened. But when I examine the conduct of the company, I'm proud of the way they dealt with limited information." HARDY: One answer to avoid the PCB problem again, says Hanley, is more testing of products before they are marketed. HANLEY: "The guy that's got the responsibility for the safety of our product is Monsanto. It is not the

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8:18 a.m. Continued	FDA, it is not the EPA. We cannot and have no interest in dodging the ultimate responsibility for the safety of our products, our processes, and the eventual disposition of those products. How much testing should we do? We should do whatever is necessary to provide assurance that what we're doing is right and it's just really as simple as that. No one else can set that standard as high as we should set it for ourselves and that's the way we conduct our business." HARDY: And that, says Anna Navarro, Director of Social Responsibility at Monsanto, is one of the lessons of PCB's. Good ethics, she claims, is good business. And she points to the millions of dollars of lawsuits filed against the firm on PCB's. NAVARRO: "We realized that the social consequences of staying in that business were such that it was no longer a profitable business. We ought to get out." HARDY: It is more than time, she says, for business practices to come into step with ecological concerns. Tomorrow we'll look at political funds in the next part of Profits and Principles.

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