bcc: Mr. W. B. Papageorge - WPAPA
Mr. C. J. Smith - CSMITH
Mr. H. S. Bergen - HBERG
Mr. T. L. Gossage - TGOSS
Dr. W. R. Richard - WRICH
Mr. E. P. Wheeler - EWHEE
FYI - Mr. D. B. Edwards - SEATTLE

March 31, 1971

Miss Susan Schwartz
The Seattle Times
Fairview Avenue N & John Streets
Seattle, Washington 98111

Dear Miss Schwartz:

I read with interest your article of March 10 "Compounds May Be Environment Threat" based on a report by Mr. E. H. Dustman at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

This letter is in no way a complaint, but an offer of assistance in the event you wish to report on the subject in the future. For that reason, I am enclosing some background information in the form of news releases issued last year which outline Monsanto Company's program to solve the PCB environmental problem.

I can honestly report at this time that the program is well under way and has been successful. Our goal was to retain the use of PCB in vital electrical applications where it is used as a safety fluid, and to protect the environment by discontinuing sales to those applications where PCB cannot be properly controlled.

PCB is an industrial chemical first produced by Monsanto 40 years ago, in this country, and later by other corporations in other countries. It was first used as a coolant in heavy-duty electrical equipment to prevent fires and explosions. This has always been the major use, even to this day. The fluid is sealed into an electrical transformer where it performs its safety function for 20 years or more. This application is what we call a "c osed system."

In the early 1960s, PCB also found limited use in such things as specialty paints, adhesives, chlorinated rubber, sealants, etc. These we called "open systems." In August, 1970, we voluntarily withdrew all sales to these applications.

Briefly, our PCB environmental program consists of the following: 1) Proper identification and measurement of the extent of the problem; 2) Tightening up of our manufacturing processes to control escape; 3) Alert all customers to the potential environmental problem and insist on proper handling and use of the material; 4) Began research to develop suitable substitutes for PCB -- some of these have already been introduced; 5) Discontinue all sales of PCB into "open-system" applications; 6) Through research, look for ways to make PCB biodegradable; 7) Offer all customers a reclamation and disposal service where all used PCB is returned to us for recycling or disposal via an incinerator which breaks it down into harmless materials, and 8) Began long-term feeding studies to accumulate extensive toxicity data and determine the long-term effect of this substance on animals.

As stated in one of the news releases attached, our PCB environmental program is based on recent evidence that PCB is a persistent chemical which builds up in the environment. We believe our program will be successful in protecting the environment, as well as protecting people from the danger of fire and explosions.

Again, please feel free to call me to discuss our program or the PCB environmental issue should the opportunity for another story arise in the future.

Sincerely,

Edward V. John
Public Relations Manager
Organic Chemicals Division

/stw

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Hill Williams, Science Editor

MONS 089509