February 23, 1989

Memo to: Raymond A. Foos
Clark G. Waite
Jere H. Brophy
James A. Dudziak
Hugh D. Hanes
Craig B. Harlan
Robert H. Rozek
Andrew J. Sandor
Daniel Paradiso

From: James E. Gulick

Subject: Hill & Knowlton - Environmental Public Relations

As discussed in our meeting on Monday, there are two major projects which are being discussed with Hill & Knowlton. In order of priority, they relate to the immediate ceramics problem and then to the overall resistence to the use of beryllium in any form.

Relative to the ceramics problem, Andy Sandor and I have established a committee which will meet with representatives of Hill & Knowlton at 10:30 Wednesday morning, March 1st.

A date has not yet been established for a meeting on the broader program. However, attached is a letter from H & K which is their initial reaction to a brief phone conversation I had with them last week. Each of you will have the opportunity to participate in this broader program.

Also attached is information about H & K and the personnel who will participate in the program.

JEG/ap

cc: Timothy J. Reid

HILL AND KNOWLTON

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Howard Marder
Senior Vice President

February 21, 1989

James E. Gulick
Vice President
Planning and Administration
Brush Wellman Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
1200 Hanna Building
Cleveland, Ohio 44115

Dear Jim:

Beryllium undoubtedly continues to have a public relations problem. We still see it cited in the media, as well as in our conversations with people who should know better, as a gravely toxic metal that is problematic for workers. This situation is indeed ironic since beryllium is in fact one of the true success stories of industry's responsible management of a potentially hazardous material. Unfortunately, the misperceptions about beryllium endure.

We would like to work with Brush Wellman to help change these common erroneous attitudes. We envision a public relations program designed to educate various audiences with the facts about beryllium and reinforce these facts consistently over time to dispel myths and misinformation about the metal.

The Audiences for a Public Relations Program

The audiences for a beryllium public relations program are many different segments of the public, several of which directly form the market for beryllium and its products. Other audiences have regulatory or informational powers that could affect these markets. Obviously, each audience requires informational materials of varying degrees of sophistication and completeness. Audiences for a beryllium public relations program include:

-- media personnel
-- scientists
-- engineers
-- industrial designers
-- technicians
-- beryllium workers
-- industrial materials buyers
-- local, state, and federal executives
-- local, state, and federal legislators
-- government regulators (local, state, and federal)
-- medical personnel (doctors, nurses, hygienists)

-- emergency workers (police and fire departments in areas where beryllium is mined and worked)
-- all science students (secondary schools and college-level)
-- engineering, chemistry, and physics majors
-- all science teachers (secondary schools and college-level)
-- professors of engineering, chemistry, and physics
-- the general public where consumption of a beryllium-containing product may come into question

Background Information

The first step in undertaking a public relations campaign for beryllium would be the research and preparation of an authoritative white paper on beryllium from which all other documents and programs must flow. The white paper would incorporate historical information as well as the most up-to-date materials available. An analysis of all the studies available on beryllium would be carried out concurrently with the preparation of this document and included.

The finished white paper would serve as the most definitive document available on beryllium. It would consist of all aspects of the metal, its properties, uses, mining, handling, regulation, safety standards, and so on.

The white paper would be an evolving document that continually incorporates any new information brought to light. While the white paper would not typically be distributed to outside audiences because of its length and detail, it could be appropriately distributed to some, especially as an accompaniment to more tailor-made materials.

Survey

A successful public relations program will necessarily need to accurately gauge the current perceptions among the various audience segments. Working with the Wirthlin Group (with whom Hill and Knowlton has a special relationship), we would undertake a survey, with particular attention paid to audience segments that form the markets for beryllium and its products. A survey would also study those groups likely to be in contact with the metal such as scientists, engineers, workers, and industrial designers.

The results of a survey will help to pinpoint the current levels of knowledge about beryllium among these various groups as well as their attitudes. We would want to know, for example, if perhaps fears about beryllium have grown out of pure ignorance about the metal, or perhaps are part of an overall mistrust of

industry. It is possible that beryllium misperceptions have been fostered through particular news or even entertainment media treatments that have lingered in the public eye.

These and other questions regarding the levels and kinds of current understanding about beryllium will need to be answered before preparing subsequent communications. A survey will also help to set communication priorities by telling us which groups, in which geographic locations, are in most need of public relations efforts because their effects on the industry are the most pronounced.

Independent Scientific Review

Third-party scientific and engineering experts from academia and industry, NASA for example, should be enlisted to review the Brush Wellman public relations materials. The testimonials of these outside experts should be cast as a foreword in the white paper and liberally referenced in all support materials, such as brochures and video scripts. The review of the material by independent scientists will persuasively verify the scientific conclusions in the public relations materials.

These third-party experts may also be used to provide objective information that is supportive of Brush Wellman in a variety of forums, such as at congressional hearings or to media representatives.

Fact Sheets and Brochures

Very necessary documents to be generated in a public relations program are brief fact sheets and brochures. These would summarize the most important and most recent information about beryllium. While most fact sheets and brochures would include information that overlaps with other fact sheets, each one would emphasize a different aspect about beryllium and its surrounding issues.

Subjects for fact sheets and brochures on beryllium and the possible audiences for them (in parentheses) could include:

-- beryllium's properties (markets, students)
-- uses (markets, general public, students)
-- how it's mined (students)
-- workplace standards explained (Be workers, plant managers, hygienists, public safety workers)
-- health effects (industrial hygienists, medical personnel)
-- diagnosing berylliosis (medical personnel)
-- safe techniques for working with Be (workers)

Videotapes

Videotapes provide the best way to convey the inherently visual subjects connected to beryllium. Several tapes should be produced to address the needs identified in the survey. The printed fact sheets would serve as the "leave behind" material whenever a videotape is viewed, since fact sheets support and summarize the tapes' information.

The flexibility of videotapes is an important consideration in their use. Tapes can be mailed to distant individuals. They can be shown to large groups followed by discussion. They can be taken home and viewed privately. Footage from tapes can be provided to TV stations for inclusion in their news coverage or even shown in their entirety on independent and cable TV stations.

Slide Presentations

Slide presentations should be developed to augment a live talk delivered to groups on beryllium-related subjects. Slide presentations can be scaled up or down in sophistication simply by rearranging and editing slides. Live presentations are thus always matched directly to the audiences at hand.

Media Training

Any Brush Wellman individual who is designated to speak on beryllium-related subjects should be professionally trained. The training would be divided into three categories:

-- presentations to groups
-- media appearances (print, radio, and TV, including news conferences)
-- congressional testimony

Sometimes the same individual from Brush Wellman would undergo training in all three areas. Or, individuals might specialize in only one or two categories.

The training program at Hill and Knowlton goes beyond generic training and extends deep into the specifics of beryllium. We would identify, for example, the most difficult questions from the media that would likely be asked at a news conference, and we would work with Brush Wellman people to develop appropriate responses.

Beryllium Speakers' Bureau

Brush Wellman scientists and engineers who are experts on beryllium should be organized into a Speakers' Bureau to address

national audiences on beryllium issues. Additionally, they should register as experts on beryllium with the Scientists' Institute for Public Information (SIPI) in New York. SIPI is a clearing house for scientific information to the media. Reporters contact SIPI to be placed in touch with experts on a wide variety of scientific subjects.

As SIPI registrants, Brush Wellman scientists and engineers will be far more likely to be called upon by the news media nationwide, thus increasing their exposure and credibility. We would work to promote the beryllium speakers' bureau to make presentations in a variety of venues.

Legislative Monitoring

Part of a public relations program should entail accurate monitoring of legislative activities at both the state and federal level in order to track legislation bearing on the beryllium industry. We would both monitor and make regular reports assessing the situations. States that should be monitored particularly include Ohio, Utah, and any state with a significant beryllium-related industry.

Public Affairs

Lobbying activities at the state and federal level on behalf of the beryllium industry should be instituted and nurtured. Whenever monitoring reveals legislative activities disturbing to the beryllium industry, public affairs work should be appropriately accelerated.

Emergency Planning

An emergency plan for beryllium mines and beryllium industrial sites should be developed and put in place. An emergency plan should be applicable to a variety of situations, mining accidents, transportation accidents, plant sabotage, or any potential situation where individuals or even entire communities could be exposed to beryllium dust. Besides being a prudent measure for coping with emergencies, an emergency plan will provide aids for minimizing public relations damage.

Paid Advertorials

As beryllium issues develop, Brush Wellman may want to consider our drafting and taking out paid "advertorials" that outline their positions on various beryllium topics. The advertorials could be strictly informational and appear in trade journals, or, they could address specific regulatory issues and run in regulatory journals.

Nurture Relations with Opposition Groups

Part of a public relations campaign would be the identification and monitoring of groups hostile to beryllium. But the campaign should go further than mere monitoring and include the development of face-to-face meetings in order to exchange information, communicate the facts about beryllium, and dilute opposition groups' effects.

Nurture Relations with the Environmental Protection Agency

Part of a Brush Wellman public relations campaign should include enhancing its relationship with EPA so EPA officials at all levels are well-informed about beryllium facts.

Challenge All Erroneous Media Treatments

A public relations program must appropriately challenge all unfair or erroneous treatment in the media to set the record straight as far as possible.

Special Programs for College Students

As part of the effort to insure future recruitment in the beryllium industry and to expand future markets, particular public relations efforts should target students. Engineering, chemistry, physics, and materials students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels should consistently receive accurate information about beryllium in several different forms.

College career exhibits should always include a beryllium information booth featuring, say, a full-size model of a space satellite made of beryllium, as well as a constantly run videotape. The videotape would tell the story of beryllium, its mining, uses, and advantages. Company representatives, with a large supply of hand-out materials, should be present to speak personally to students about both careers in the beryllium industry as well as on the benefits of the metal.

Hill and Knowlton

Hill and Knowlton is a world-wide public relations agency with 57 offices in 20 countries. Because we are widespread, we can provide our clients with instant, locally-tailored solutions to public relations problems, along with a national or even global perspective.

We are also very experienced in managing scientific issues through our Division of Scientific, Technical, and Environmental Affairs (STEA) in New York. Some of the public relations

campaigns run by our STEA office are analogous to the beryllium situation. They include:

-- asbestos and human health
-- saccharin and federal regulation
-- dioxin and public health
-- lead and public health
-- vinyl chloride and cancer

These campaigns were akin to the beryllium situation because in each case entire industries were threatened as a result of misperception, fear, uninformed reporting, and organized opposition.

Though each situation of course had unique characteristics, many of our methods for changing public opinion, with subsequent positive actions by the public, legislators, media, regulatory agencies, and the industries' markets, were similar.

As in the case with saccharin, for example, we were eventually able to fend off an FDA ban of the artificial sweetener. In the case of vinyl chloride we were successful in easing what would have been onerous OSHA standards and gaining far more balanced media coverage.

Attached is a copy of a backgrounder on STEA along with several of the case histories described above.

I hope our proposals for beryllium begin to provide an idea of what Hill and Knowlton would cover in a comprehensive campaign on behalf of Brush Wellman. Please call me if I can answer any questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,

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DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Pollution, carcinogens, hazardous waste -- those buzz words of the 1970s have become a solid part of the environmental ethic of the 1980s. No one any longer questions the need to protect the environment or the health of workers or the health of the public.

Yet problems can arise. Accidents, spills, and the development of new scientific information on the health effects of a substance or product can still create an instant crisis with long-term implications for a company or an industry.

To help clients cope with problems such as these, Hill and Knowlton New York created what is now known as the Division of Scientific, Technical, and Environmental Affairs (STEA) in 1966 -- years before the first "Earth Day" or the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency.

STEA's mission is to provide rapid and knowledgeable assistance to clients facing the tough medical, scientific, consumer, environmental, and occupational health issues that continue to grow in number and complexity.

Through the years, the Division has been involved in dozens of major scientific issues, such as the FDA's attempt to ban saccharin, the dispute about the impact of commercial phosphates on lakes; the health effects of lead; the threat of ozone depletion; dioxin contamination, vinyl chloride and cancer, and the many health questions surrounding the use of asbestos.

Services

STEA counsels clients on potential and existing problems arising from the introduction of potential controversial new products, ingredients, or manufacturing techniques. It aids in relations with activist groups and the federal regulatory agencies. It is skilled in helping industries develop sound, understandable positions on controversial issues that are based on difficult scientific questions.

Although every problem has its own shape and its own special positioning and communications needs, the STEA staff has found that some skills have a general application in issue communications. These include such services as:

- Planning and carrying out short- or long-term environmental, occupational health, or consumer programs, on either a local or national basis or for special audiences;

- Preparing factual materials for use in speeches, brochures, special reports, and films;

- Providing industry information to environmental, science, and consumer writers and other media contacts;

- Helping clients present company or industry positions before local, state, and federal regulatory bodies;

- Advising clients on the environmental, occupational health, safety, and consumer implications of new products or substances;

- Aiding in establishing and operating professional seminars dealing with health issues.

Special Services

The unit can conduct vulnerability audits for clients to spot potential problem areas and suggest courses of action. STEA also specializes in developing and implementing marketing public relations programs to support the introduction of advanced-technology products and services, such as computers, electronics, and telecommunications.

STEA maintains its own specialized science library complete with a computerized on-line database capability for rapid

retrieval of information on a wide range of subjects including medicine, chemicals, drugs, cancer, and toxic substances. STEA's own research consultant can conduct literature searches and produce special reports on request.

In addition, more than 100 major science, environmental, medical, and occupational health publications are monitored by STEA.

Hill and Knowlton clients worldwide can get information to more than 10,000 scientifically-oriented editors quickly and effectively through Science & Industry News and Feature Leads. Each issue of this "tip sheet" contains one-paragraph summaries of new products, techniques, or research results without mentioning the client name or product. Interested editors just call in or send a reply card for background information.

The services and resources of the Division can be made available as part of a client's total public relations program, or may be used to develop a separate program that relates exclusively to a specific issue. Short-term trouble-shooting assignments are also accepted for companies that are not on Hill and Knowlton's client list.

During the past decade STEA has worked with corporate and trade association clients on a wide range of science-based problems. Many programs have involved issues that have achieved

"landmark" status in the formation of environmental and occupational regulations. Some typical projects include:

- Working with chemical, plastics, and metals companies in connection with federal hearings on occupational health standards and developing follow-up communication programs to explain the industry's positive actions;

- Aiding pharmaceutical companies with health and safety problems raised by the FDA or activist groups;

- Helping producers and users of food additives to clarify safety aspects and ward off restrictive regulation on products sought by consumerists or federal agencies;

- Helping manufacturers tell their side of the story when their products have been placed under boycott by special interest groups;

- Organizing grass roots support for Congressional action to ward off a threatened ban for an artificial sweetener.

- Carrying out a successful campaign to convince community residents and local environmental officials that a metal smelter required a five-year variance to

find the technology needed to meet strict local air pollution regulations;

- Organizing and conducting a nationwide media tour for eminent scientists to present a balanced view of the role that chemicals play in the earth's atmosphere;

- Developing public service print and broadcast messages about the proper use of medicines and enlisting doctors to write health advice for several newspaper series, later published as booklets;

- Developing fire-safety programs that dealt with building-code officials, fire chiefs, local, state, and federal regulatory bodies in response to product flammability problems;

- Conducting national backgrounding campaigns for editorial writers and other media executives aimed at ensuring that industry's views on health and environmental issues are understood and carried to the public.

Staff

One of the keys to STEA's success is the knowledge and talent of a unique and diverse staff. The Division is staffed by professionals with long experience in a wide variety of scientific and technical issues. Staff members work closely with client scientists, executives, and legal specialists in determining strategies and tactics. They translate difficult and complex scientific information into materials easily understood by laymen and decision-makers who lack technical backgrounds.

Matthew Swetonic, Director

Matthew Swetonic, senior vice president and head of Hill & Knowlton's crisis communications task force, has handled crisis communications and occupational environmental health problems for clients in chemical, mining, plastics, food, and cosmetics industries.

Howard Marder, Deputy Director

Howard Marder, senior vice president, has been active on a variety of science- and technology-related accounts since joining Hill & Knowlton in 1979. He formerly served as director of Hill and Knowlton's Industrial and Scientific Communications Services Unit.

John Mullane, Associate Director

John Mullane, specializes in crisis communications for corporations, especially regarding environmental health issues.

Other key staff members include Eugene McLoughlin, who has years of experience in corporate communications regarding safety and health, construction, and plastics; Milton Bellis, who has conducted major corporate programs in the electric utility, pharmaceutical, and other consumer product/service fields; Bill Berry, who works in corporate communications and corporate image, and internal and external written communications; David Kalson, who specializes in risk assessment and communication with a concentration in the physical sciences; Pamela Snook, who concentrates on environmental crisis communications and health-care issues; Marie Overfors who specializes in corporate communications regarding community and employee relations and environmental health; and Diana Shevzoff, who edits STEA's media "tip sheet" works on advanced technology accounts and serves as a resource on all STEA activities. STEA also features two senior consultants: James Callaghan, who specializes in environmental, medical, and occupational health issues; and Nona O'Connell, who provides research and information services regarding developing issues.

RESULTS

After more than 20 years of crisis communications, the STEA team's accomplishments quietly speak for themselves. The pattern of success, however, has built a reputation that is lauded loudly.

- "In crisis management, when the going gets tough, the tough turn to the pros like Hill and Knowlton, the New York public relations firm. Hill and Knowlton is the SWAT team of PR firms. Hill and Knowlton is who corporate executives call when Mike Wallace and his 60 Minutes crew are knocking at the door." Boston Magazine

- "Hill and Knowlton is one of the premier firms in crisis PR -- it has handled PR on a wide variety of problems including the Kansas City Hyatt Hotel skywalk disaster, the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident, the health risk charges surrounding the morning-sickness drug bendectin, toxic shock syndrome, and the safety questions surrounding Kero-Sun kerosene heaters." Newsday

- "Hill and Knowlton...has a division that helps clients anticipate crises and plan what they would do if the unthinkable were to occur." Phoenix Republic

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HILL AND KNOWLTON

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The Division of Scientific, Technical and Environmental Affairs

The Division of Scientific, Technical and Environmental Affairs (STEA) counsels clients faced with a range of medical, scientific, technical, consumer, environmental, and occupational health issues.

It advises clients on potential and existing problems arising from controversy over product ingredients, and manufacturing techniques. The division also specializes in developing and implementing marketing public relations programs to support the introduction of advanced-technology products and services, such as computers, electronics, and telecommunications.

STEA is staffed by professionals with many years of experience in dealing with scientific, technical, and health-related issues. STEA professionals are capable of working closely with client scientists, executives, and legal specialists in translating complex scientific information into materials easily understood by people who lack a technical background.

Case Histories

The following pages contain case histories detailing Hill and Knowlton's work on selected environmental, and occupational health issues:

- Siting a Municipal Waste Incinerator
- Vinyl Chloride and Cancer
- Asbestos and Human Health
- Dioxin and Public Health
- Fluorocarbons and Ozone Depletion
- Saccharin and the FDA
- Toxic Wastes Threaten Major Manufacturing Facility
- Groundwater Contamination Harms Company Reputation

Siting a Municipal Waste Incinerator

Problem/Situation

A municipality has spent seven years studying and planning the purchase and installation of a refuse to energy plant that will play a key role in their overall plan to deal with a growing trash crisis. At a late stage in the siting process a powerful opposition crystalizes around questions of environmental impact and safety. Suddenly, a story that had received little press attention was page one news, and the local community was being aroused by false and exaggerated charges. A pending hearing, perceived as a perfunctory part of the process, suddenly loomed as a major battle that could well prove critical. Coming to testify for the opposition would be the leaders of three national environmental groups with a history of opposition to incineration.

Action

Working in concert with governmental officials, Hill and Knowlton developed a strategy for dealing with both the community relations aspects of the crisis and the hearing that would likely decide the issue.

To build a better understanding of the project among members of the press and the general public, Hill and Knowlton undertook the following activities:

- Development of background papers on the various emissions and discharges (lead, cadmium, dioxin, dibenzofurans, wastewater and ash).
- Developed a general background paper on the trash crisis: the landfill situation, health hazards associated with landfills, and the future scope of the trash crisis.
- Trained spokespeople to address key issues in various forums.
- Planned briefing sessions with both officials and community leaders.
- Developed handouts and direct mail materials.
- Produced and directed a video program for community dissemination and airing on the local television station.
- Initiated a series of meetings in the community to brief local civic and social groups on the project.

To maximize the effectiveness of the government's presentation at the Planning Board hearing, Hill and Knowlton undertook a number of activities:

- Researched key issues from technical, social and media viewpoints.
- Assisted in the identification of third party experts capable of testifying in support of government.
- Helped develop both general and specific tactics for the hearings: timing and order of presentations; issues to be covered; speakers' areas of concern; introduction and summary; etc.
- Prepared specific language/testimony for presentation in the hearings.
- Provided audio visual supports for presentations.
- Assisted technical/experts with both presentations and responses to questions and answers.
- Developed backgrounder on environmental health issues and background papers contrasting various incineration technologies.

Results

By intelligently challenging the misstatements and exaggerations of their opponents, the government was successful in bringing both perspective and good sense to bear on the garbage crisis facing the state and its citizens. Editorial and public opinion took a perceptible turn in favor of the proposed incinerator. The media briefings and community meetings had played a major role in successfully educating the public to the facts and placing the environmental health issues in perspective.

Although the opposition was successful in creating other roadblocks to the actual construction phase, the objections of the environmental groups were clearly blunted during the hearings. It is expected that these last few delays will be resolved by late summer 1988 and plant construction on the mass burn incinerator will begin in September.

Vinyl Chloride and Cancer

Problem/Situation

The polyvinyl chloride (PVC) industry was under attack from the press and regulatory agencies. Work with industry legal and medical experts was needed to mitigate overly restrictive occupational and environmental health regulations on vinyl chloride. The Society of the Plastics Industry needed to retain and, where necessary, rebuild customer and consumer confidence in the safety of finished PVC products. It also had to strengthen and/or reestablish the credibility of the PVC industry among critical audiences in government and the private sector.

Action

Starting in early 1974, Hill and Knowlton offices and affiliates throughout the United States labored to help fight and finally bring under control one of the most violent media and government regulatory firestorms ever experienced by a single industry through the following actions:

- Developed a basic media relations strategy in the early stages of the controversy.
- Handled hundreds of press inquiries on the problem.
- Conducted "devil's advocate" sessions for industry spokespersons before they testified at OSHA and EPA hearings on vinyl chloride.
- Orchestrated all media and government relations efforts on behalf of the industry for OSHA and EPA hearings.
- Prepared and updated through the years general background papers on various aspects of the problem, including papers on occupational health, PVC packaging, vinyl chloride air pollution, birth defects, and risk/benefit analyses.
- Worked with various radio and television stations and networks to ensure objectivity in their specials on vinyl chloride.

- Organized a government affairs effort to bring congressional pressure to bear on OSHA on the industry's behalf.

- Prepared testimony for congressional hearings and various state regulatory and legislative initiatives concerning vinyl chloride.

- Wrote numerous articles and letters to the editor on vinyl chloride.

- Prepared informational material for employees as part of OSHA-mandated compliance program.

- Established nationwide monitoring program of state legislatures and regulatory agencies.

- Established nationwide, trade, medical, and environmentalist media monitoring program.

- Initiated periodic "Kiplinger-type" newsletters to keep the industry, its customers, and the media informed of major developments affecting vinyl chloride.

- Provided radio-television and confrontation training for more than two dozen industry spokespersons.

- Organized and carried out nationwide media briefing program on vinyl chloride.

- Developed political support system that identified, assessed, and, when needed, made use of the political strengths inherent in the industry.

Results

- Largely because of the communications effort, OSHA was forced to pledge publicly to the media and Congress that it "would not put the PVC industry out of business." The resultant standards were significantly less onerous than had been originally proposed.

- After the original rush of sensational stories, media coverage of the vinyl chloride problem became far more balanced.

- The industry received high marks from the media and others for the manner in which it identified, studied, and brought under control the vinyl chloride problem. Even as outspoken a critic as Dr. Irving Selikoff was quoted as saying that vinyl chloride was one of the great occupational health success stories.

- The industry continues to flourish.

Asbestos and Human Health

Problem/Situation

For nearly two decades, asbestos has been the target of unending assaults by federal, state, and local government portions of the medical community, the environmentalist community, some segments of organized labor, and citizens groups of various kinds. Many of the health charges leveled against asbestos have a strong basis in fact; others do not.

Hill and Knowlton was retained by Johns-Manville (now Manville Corp.) to work on the asbestos issue in 1967 and has since worked on the issue on a more or less continuous basis for Manville and other clients.

Action

The basic strategic approach employed by STEA has been to admit to the hazards of asbestos where they are demonstrable, publicize the efforts of the industry to identify and control asbestos health hazards, and, finally, to combat the often hysterical charges of some groups concerning the hazards of infinitesimal amounts of asbestos in the environment.

Over the years, Hill and Knowlton has:

- Prepared background papers on many aspects of the asbestos health controversy for the general public and the scientific community.
- Prepared testimony for delivery at governmental and other hearings and meetings on asbestos.
- Worked on behalf of the industry with government officials in OSHA, FDA, and EPA and at the state and local level.
- Prepared audiovisual and other materials for use with citizens and other groups concerned about asbestos.
- Helped organize and conduct symposia on asbestos hazards.

- Recommended to the industry and was instrumental in the formation of the Asbestos Information Association to speak for the industry on asbestos health issues (the current co-director of STEA was the first full-time executive director of the Association).

- Worked with various companies on the public relations aspects of the legal issues facing the industry.

- Worked on helping asbestos companies combat public hysteria at the local plant level.

- Worked with members of the scientific community to help them explain in an understandable fashion to various audiences their research on the hazards (or lack thereof) of small amounts of asbestos in the environment.

- Handled the public announcement of the establishment of the Asbestos Claims Facility to settle asbestos health claims out of court.

- Prepared and distributed press releases and press kits on various aspects of asbestos and health on numerous occasions.

- Developed brochures and booklets for various audiences, including industry employees, on various aspects of asbestos and health.

- Consulted with asbestos company executives at the highest levels on strategic and tactical approaches to a wide variety of governmental, medical, legal, and general public problems associated with asbestos.

- Handled the public relations aspects of a number of high-visibility public hearings on asbestos at all levels of government.

Results

- Despite the validity of many of the claims made against asbestos and the efforts of various groups to eliminate the material from our society, the industry still exists and is producing products that are safe.

- The OSHA and EPA standards on asbestos developed in the early '70s were sufficiently lenient so as to give the industry time to develop and install appropriate technological controls and to develop substitute products for some asbestos applications. STEA was heavily involved at many levels of activity in the development of these standards.

- On many occasions, the industry has been successful in defusing and bringing under control hysterical assaults on asbestos.

Dioxin and Public Health

Problem/Situation

A major chemical manufacturer recently found itself on network newscasts and the front pages of major daily newspapers across the country for allegedly polluting a nearby river with the chemical contaminant dioxin. Although the company had not produced dioxin-contaminated products or wastes for three to four years and was in compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act, local environmental groups and national news reports all but accused the company of creating another Times Beach. Whenever the company tried to communicate, it found its messages were lost either in the complexity or the emotionalism that are inherent in the dioxin issue.

Action

Since Hill and Knowlton had several years' experience with the dioxin issue from working with a European client, we counselled that before the public could put the issue into perspective, a very basic information campaign had to be conducted to educate the working press. It was clear that even science, medical, and environmental writers from some of the better newspapers across the country did not have the facts straight.

To build a better understanding of the issue among the working press and general public, we undertook the following projects:

- Developed a fully referenced media background paper on dioxin and human health.
- Trained 25 research scientists (many of them leaders in their fields) to serve as spokespersons to explain the scientific issues.
- Arranged broadcast and print media interviews with science, medical, environmental, and editorial writers.
- Arranged for the scientists to participants in radio talk and call-in shows.
- Provided the media with a background kit with extensive information from a broad range of sources.

- Offered follow-up materials and interviews in response to breaking news.

- Put into place a 38-city national media monitoring network to allow same-day response to erroneous or damaging media coverage. We handled necessary responses.

- Produced periodic (often weekly) reviews of media coverage stressing major new developments in the controversy, and any changes in the tone of the media coverage. The updates also contained summaries of new scientific studies or of general reviews of the issue in scientific, quasi-scientific, or environmentalist publications.

- Trained the company president, chairman of the board, and chief legal counsel for specific network TV interviews. In each situation, revelations of apparent misconduct had placed the company in a perilous PR situation. The three corporate officers -- by their willingness to appear for interviews and their adeptness in handling the situations -- helped calm the situation and ease the strains on the company's credibility.

- In order to bring greater scientific credibility to the company's position, suggested and helped organize a scientific symposium on dioxin so that many researchers in the field who had important positive data to report could do so in a situation designed for maximum media exposure.

- Prepared a variety of by-lined articles for various publications, op-ed pieces, and short position papers on specific areas of concern.

- We worked with the client to identify a variety of scientific areas that were of concern to government and media but that could be addressed with relatively inexpensive, short-term scientific research. We then helped the company design a research program to answer those questions, organized a national press conference at the company's headquarters to announce the program, and publicized both the program and its intermediate results as they occurred.

Results

As a result of nearly 400 media interviews in just five months, the client established itself as an authority on dioxin research -- which was deserved, but not widely recognized before the program began. Most of the media, by their own admission and as evidenced in their reporting, had a better understanding of the complexity of the issues. In some instances, editorial writers praised the client for providing a "valuable public service." In addition, a random focus group survey confirmed that the messages delivered by the scientists were effective in putting the issue into perspective. Charges that the client had polluted its own backyard faded from the national spotlight as the company's expertise and scientific integrity became better known.

Fluorocarbons and Ozone Depletion

Problem/Situation

Scientific allegations that fluorocarbons released from aerosol spray cans were a threat to the earth's ozone layer had become a cause celebre in the media and government. Despite the fact that there was no real scientific proof of the charges, and that it would be years before facts could be assembled, the media fastened on the threat of increased skin cancer and the doomsday aspects of the story. Public concern and fear about the future caused fluorocarbon users to look to alternatives. Hill and Knowlton was asked by Du Pont to help calm fears, get better reporting of the issues, and gain up to two or three years before the government took action to ban fluorocarbons.

Actions

- An intensive monitoring, analysis, and action program was established to react to federal, state, and local government actions to ban fluorocarbons.
- A complete scientific backgrounder was developed and distributed to science writers nationwide.
- Efforts to assuage fears of customers were undertaken. This included development of a personal letter from the chairman of the board to client chief executive officers explaining the situation; our follow-up consisted of newsletters repeating the assurances and reporting on new research findings. A scientist and marketing person were trained for visits to Du Pont's largest customers to outline the situation and explain research efforts.
- A quick-response network was set up to deal with new allegations and to report new scientific findings.
- Platforms were sought and speakers prepared to report the latest findings and to explain the situation.
- All spokespersons were given radio/TV and speech training as well as preparation for newspaper interviews.

- A nationwide series of media briefings for editorial boards and science writers was developed in major communications centers.

- An intensive media and scientific monitoring program was set up and implemented on an international basis.

- A science newsletter was established to keep some 3,000 academic scientists aware of new developments.

- Employee support was sought through informational and motivational programs, frequent stories in employee publications, and discussions at employee meetings.

- Communications were established with environmental and other activist groups.

- Surveys were executed on a regular basis to measure public opinion, the effects of Du Pont's messages, and changes in public attitudes.

Results

- Du Pont gained much needed time to find scientific answers to the allegations and to develop alternatives to fluorocarbons.

- The government postponed any immediate actions against the use of fluorocarbons.

- Public opinion against purchasing fluorocarbon aerosols was kept to a minimum.

- More accurate reporting of the scientific issues occurred in the nation's press, with a resultant change in editorial positions in many newspapers.

Saccharin and the FDA

Problem/Situation

On March 9, 1977, on the basis of Canadian tests with laboratory rats, the Food and Drug Administration announced its intention to ban saccharin from foods, beverages, medicines, and other products.

Hill and Knowlton was retained to direct the campaign with the diet food industry's trade association, the Calorie Control Council. The underlying assignment was to encourage and sustain public sentiment in favor of saccharin. As soon as legislation to delay the ban was introduced, the assignment was refined to focus public attention on the actions of Congress.

Two basic strategies were employed:

- Concentrating publicity efforts on the studies and statements of scientists, medical authorities, and other credentialled third-party sources (rather than industry or association spokespersons).
- Stimulating citizen groups to make their pro-saccharin views known to media, Congress, and other groups, and assisting them in their efforts.

Action

Hill and Knowlton's defense of saccharin was structured in two phases. Phase I -- from March 9 to November 23, 1977 -- covered the period from the ban announcement to President Carter's signing of a bill mandating an 18-month delay or moratorium. Phase II covered the period from November 23, 1977, through June 1980.

The scope of the campaign in both phases was such that only a representative sampling of Hill and Knowlton's ongoing activities can be listed here:

- An overnight media blitz got the industry's response on the air and in print nationwide in less than 24 hours.
- Basic background materials, including scientific backgrounders, brochures, and press kits, were created.

- A "counter" press conference was staged on the front steps of the FDA building and received equal attention from all networks, wires, and major newspapers.

- Third-party testimony was coordinated and publicized during FDA public hearings.

- Major media events organized by third parties, such as a trainload of diabetics arriving in D.C. to protest, were promoted.

- "News banks" composed of lay and scientific spokespersons were established in addition to Hill and Knowlton's instant-response mechanism.

- Major public opinion polls were conducted and publicized by Hill and Knowlton's survey research subsidiary.

- Members of Congress and their staffs were constantly updated through scientific briefings, mailings, and in-person visits.

- Hundreds of radio feeds and dozens of press releases augmented an extensive one-on-one interview campaign with national media.

- Major market support campaigns were conducted with third-party supporters and media.

- Significant scientific research was monitored and promoted.

- Letter-writing and telephone campaigns were conducted.

Results

Initially, Congress voted to stay the ban while further research was conducted, and Hill and Knowlton went back into the field and expanded its grass-roots support campaign.

In key cities around the country, briefing meetings were held with allied organization leaders. Calorie Control Council spokespersons, doctors, and scientists brought them up to date on current research. As the 18 months drew to a

close, media activity was stepped up at both local and national levels, and allies were urged to write their congressmen in support of a moratorium extension.

Extension came quickly in the House but languished in a Senate subcommittee until its chairman, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D.-Mass), could be persuaded. During this period, Hill and Knowlton continued to provide information to the senator's staff and to generate favorable publicity. Senate approval finally came, extending the moratorium for three years to allow for more research.

President Ronald Reagan's administration was moved to bring an analysis of the risks/benefits of additives into existing food regulations, and saccharin has been singled out as a product that should stay on the market. Thus, according to Secretary of Health and Human Services Richard Schweiker, the FDA now has no plans to renew its attack on the artificial sweetener.

Toxic Wastes Threaten Major Manufacturing Facility

Problem/Situation

In early 1985, a manufacturer in the Northeast was confronted with a broad range of environmental problems and an increasingly suspicious press that was enthusiastically trumpeting each development. The company, which employs some 4,000 workers and has annual sales of $300 million, was concerned that its ability to do business in three communities might be impaired by the steady flow of negative attention.

Hill and Knowlton met with key company personnel and began work on both immediate and long-range communication problems.

The most immediate crisis involved toxic chemicals that were leaching from a dump used by the company for 20 years. The chemicals, which included known carcinogens and suspected carcinogens, had migrated into private residential wells in the community. EPA inspectors on the scene were considering the company's landfill for inclusion on the National Priorities List as a "superfund" site.

At another manufacturing site in the same state, the company was involved in a series of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act problems and had been cited by the federal government for a number of violations. A third problem involved the plant's waste stream and discharges above permissible state limits into the town's sewage system.

Action

- To deal with the immediate environmental crisis, Hill and Knowlton prepared company officials for press questions. H&K suggested ways to respond effectively and place sensitive issues in proper perspective.
- Background papers and "talking" documents were prepared.
- A long-range public affairs plan, touching all corporate communication programs, was devised.

- Future developments were anticipated so the company could establish itself as the most accurate source of information on the problem.

- Company spokespersons were trained.

- Communications were established with local government officials so they would have the full story, in advance of press articles.

- Press conferences and private meetings between company officials and reporters and editors were arranged.

- Positive stories relating to environmental and other subjects were developed and placed to create a greater public awareness of the company's contributions to the community.

In an ongoing relationship with the company, Hill and Knowlton helped write engineering reports detailing hydro-geological conditions, closure plans, and waste treatment programs to avoid future misunderstandings in the media. Press releases and talking documents based on these reports were written and distributed to the media.

Results

As the second largest employer in the state, the company was able to gain considerable favorable exposure for its civic efforts.

Key reporters, who had viewed the company suspiciously, were now calling company officials at home to verify information verbally offered them by town officials. The company spokespersons came to be regarded as the authorities on these complex environmental problems.

Public events and government filing deadlines were given continuing coverage by the newspapers, but in virtually every situation the company's position -- as outlined in press releases and background papers -- was given strong coverage.

Groundwater Contamination Harms Company Reputation

Problem/Situation

A manufacturing company based in a small central Pennsylvania community was linked to groundwater contamination by an ongoing state investigation. Although the preliminary findings were far from conclusive, testing had shown that chemical contaminants found in reserve wells for the local public water supply were present in the soil on the plant property. Bolstering the "case" against the client was the fact that the company had indeed used -- and disposed of -- the chemicals on its property many years earlier. When the state issued its initial report, the press, public, and local officials quickly reached the conclusion that the chemical contaminants from the plant site were leaching into the groundwater under the plant and then flowing into the public wells. The general consensus was that the client was "guilty as charged" even though the state did not place blame in its preliminary report.

Hill and Knowlton was retained just as the company was about to reveal the findings of a plant-site water flow study conducted by the company's engineering consultants. The study was requested and monitored by the state and paid for by the client. Although the engineering report could not prove that the company had not caused the problem, it did reveal that groundwater flowing from the plant was flowing away from the public wells. Realizing that the scientific data were beginning to cast doubt on the initial findings and accusations, the company wanted to capitalize on the immediate opportunity, repair its reputation in the wake of the earlier bad press, and inject some reason into what had become a highly emotional -- and political -- debate.

Action

To accomplish these objectives, Hill and Knowlton undertook the following actions:

- Hill and Knowlton prepared background materials on VOCs.
- Counseled the client on its negotiations with the state.
- Prepared public statements, and arranged a press conference and follow-up briefings for key media and public officials.

Results

- Obtained a state spokesman to participate in the client's press conference and clarify that the state's initial findings were not conclusive.
- Changed the attitudes of the press, local officials, and public who believed the client was "guilty as charged" by highlighting the findings of the company-sponsored engineering report.
- Stopped the flow of rumors and negative news stories by underscoring the fact that even the state labeled its first report preliminary and inconclusive.
- Built a broader public understanding of the chemicals in question -- volatile organic compounds (VOCs) -- and their pervasiveness in groundwater throughout the country.
- Clarified that the chemicals found in the groundwater were no longer used at the plant and that the facility was in compliance with all state and federal health, safety and environmental standards.
- Positioned the client as open and cooperative and as interested in finding the source of pollution as the state.