Monsanto

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REFERENCE : HAV/bjo'g.

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Organic Chemicals - PCB Environmental Studies - Europe.

Business Situation.

1. U.K. press comment arising from "New Scientist" article on Monsanto's response to the PCB problem has generally been very favourable. Publication of this article coincided with the release of the NERC report on the Irish Sea Bird Wreck and press comment has generally linked both items. We have also agreed to an interview for Independent Television's "News at Ten", one of the major U.K. television news programmes.

2. Contract proposals for the Purle Waste agreement are to be reviewed in St. Louis at month end.

3. The Swedish National Environment Protection Board has recommended the Government to control the use of PCBs and ban its use for some applications. It is expected that legislation will come into force next January. We expect to meet the Director of Research for the Board next month. It is reported that similar action may follow in Finland.

Environmental Studies. Mainpage, Vodden

An informal meeting of the Pesticide Chemicals Group was attended at Unilever, Welwyn, Hertfordshire. At this meeting we obtained very useful information on the identification of GLC peaks using capillary columns with Apiezon L as stationary phase. Results of feeding trials on pigeons and quail using Aroclors 1242 and 1254 and some pure isomers were reported by Ministry of Agriculture workers, with particular reference to degradation residues.

Koeman and Vos from Utrecht reported on the distribution of PCBs in the Rhine Estuary and on relative toxicities of commercial PCB products.

Other papers included one from the Fisheries Laboratory on the distribution of PCBs in fish in U.K. coastal waters. This was interesting in that it showed very low levels in fish taken from the Bristol Channel (Newport Plant!), but very high levels in the Clyde Estuary. Explanations for this distribution do not seem very conclusive.

Biodegradation.

Improvement in analytical techniques using capillary column GLC has yielded further results on degradation residues which suggest that MCS1016 may be a bigger improvement over Aroclor 1242 than we had previously estimated. We have also had access to other workers' results which have enabled better identification of chromatogram peaks to be made. We also have some results of feeding trials which show that degradation of many isomers in animal organs is different from that induced by micro-organism of the types we have so far studied. On the basis of these results we conclude that residues from MCS1016 would be very small and our present view is that MCS1016 does provide a very significant improvement over Aroclor 1242 from the environmental viewpoint. Further work is planned to substantiate these views during the next few weeks.

B.V.O'Gorman.

H.A. VODDEN.