



THE SOCIETY OF THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY, INC.
250 PARK AVENUE • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017 • 212/573-9400

RALPH L. HARDING, JR.
PRESIDENT

March 10, 1975

TO: VCM-PVC PRODUCERS COMMITTEE

MODERN PLASTICS MARCH EDITORIAL

Attached is a proof sheet from Sid Gross' editorial in Modern Plastics in his March issue. I disagree with his comments about the VCM-PVC industry credibility. On the other hand, I respect his opinion. I hope that each of you will send a letter suitable for publication in his April issue commenting on this matter.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ralph', is written below the word 'Cordially,'.

RLH:sms

Attached.

cc: J. Heckman
J. Lawrence
S. Nuspliger
M. Swetonic

SPI23253

Editorial

VCM lessons

An informal survey among PVC producers following the Appellate Court's ruling upholding the OSHA standard on VCM (see p. 14) uncovered no rush to shut down the vinyl industry. Of course, no one was jumping with joy either; and no one was belittling the tasks now faced by the industry in meeting the standard. But the dire predictions of an end to the U.S. vinyl industry certainly seem to have fizzled.

Yet such predictions were made—and buttressed with extensive statistics of massive job losses—at various stages of the discussions leading up to the final standard. And the impression they left was that if OSHA prevailed, PVC was doomed.

As it turns out, no such thing is going to happen. There are ways, apparently, of meeting the challenge. They may be expensive, but they seem manageable.

Why, then, did the vinyl industry take its "we can't survive" position? One must assume that it was a tactical stance. But such a stance carries grave risks . . . on two counts.

First, it scares the users. Faced with the possibility that his supplies will disappear, the traditional vinyl user will start scrambling for substitute materials or for overseas sources . . . both damaging to the domestic vinyl industry. What, for example, is an automotive producer going to do? He is committed to an average of about 30 lb. per car. He must protect himself.

Second, it destroys the industry's credibility; and that will cost dearly in its future dealings with regulatory agencies . . . and, of course, in its dealings with customers too.

The damage is done this time. But perhaps we've learned our lesson so it won't happen next time.

Another lesson, this one to be learned by the government, is the need to be more conscientious in defining exactly what the issue is. The popular press, picking up catch phrases here and buzz words there, tends to sensationalize its reporting on public issues. And before you know it there are people worrying about handling telephone wire, baby pants, nursing bottles, packaging film, and whatnot.

Government agencies have the responsibility of assuring that the health of the nation is guarded. But they also have the responsibility of seeing to it that in the process the nation's standard of living is not destroyed. In the VCM case, government officials have failed to assure the public of the safety of the products in common use. In the atmosphere of hysteria surrounding VCM, such assurance was clearly called for. Clarification of the issues may not produce the headlines a cancer scare will, but it is essential nevertheless to keep the population on an even keel. We have to make sure that in future issues of this type the government is aware of that responsibility.



100 at 1700 p.m.
3/10/75

FOR YOUR INFORMATION BARNES OF ICI CALLED ME THIS MORNING TO ADVISE THAT ON MARCH 6 MALTONI REPORTED TO HIS SPONSORS ON HIS RAT INGESTION STUDIES: ONE ANGIOSARCOMA OF THE THYMUS GLAND AFTER 45 WEEKS FEEDING AT 50 MILLIGRAMS PER KILO AND ONE LIVER ANGIOSARCOMA AT 16.6 AFTER OVER 50 WEEKS FEEDING. BARNES REMINDS US THAT THE 16.6 INGESTION ROUGHLY EQUATES WITH 50 PPM INHALATION.

EUROPEAN PVC COMPANIES NOW VERBALLY INFORMING THEIR GOVERNMENTS. THEREFORE, PER MY REQUEST, BECKMAN HAS VERBALLY NOTIFIED BOTH FDA AND NIOSH.

INCIDENTALLY, MALTONI IS PARTICIPATING THIS WEEK IN STOCKHOLM TOXICOLOGY CONFERENCE, WITH BOTH REPORTERS AND AMERICAN DELEGATION LIKELY TO INQUIRE ABOUT HIS INGESTION FINDINGS TO DATE. THUS, YOU CAN EXPECT USA PRESS COVERAGE SOON. I PLAN NO PRESS RELEASE FROM SPI AT THIS TIME.

RALPH L. HARDING, JR.
PRESIDENT
SOCIETY OF THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY

SPI23255



Telefax

CALL
LETTERS KKK

PAID CHARGE SOCIETY OF THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY
TO

Mr. Robert Leschen
The Plastics Institute of Australia
P. O. Box 131
St. Kilda West 3182
Australia.

March 12, 1975

VCM AGAIN. MALTONI THIS WEEK ANNOUNCED 2 ANGIOSARCOMA CASES FROM RAT FEEDING STUDIES, ONE AT 50 MILLIGRAMS PER KILO AND ANOTHER AT 16.6 AFTER 45 AND 50 WEEKS. THE 16.6 ROUGHLY TRANSLATES TO HIGHER THAN 50PPM INHALATION. FRENCH CALCULATE THAT 16.6 RAT DAILY INGESTION IS EQUIVALENT OF HUMAN CONSUMPTION VIA VCM MIGRATION FROM 20,000 PVC WINE BOTTLES. WHILE THIS REALLY CHANGES NOTHING, NEW EVIDENCE LIKELY TO BRING NEW ROUND OF PRESS SENSATION. WE HAVE ALERTED TWO AGENCIES, FDA AND NIOSH. SUGGEST YOU CONTACT ICI AUSTRALIA

RALPH L. HARDING, JR.
SFI

SENDING BLANK

Send the above message, subject to terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

PLEASE TYPE OR WRITE PLAINLY WITHIN BORDER-DO NOT FOLD

WU 1288 (R9/69)

SP123256

Brain File

RECORD IN FILE

March 13, 1975

Subject: MALTONI AND VCM

On Monday, March 10 at about 10:15 a.m., I received a call from Barry Barnes, of ICI. He reported to me that Maltoni's sponsors had met with him in Milan on the previous Thursday, March 6. Barry tried to call me on March 7, but could not get through from Milan.

Maltoni reported that he has discovered two angio cases in his ingestion studies. He has been feeding at 50, 16.6 and 3 milligrams per kilo per day (by proportion to the weight of the rat). After 45 weeks he has a dead rat with angio of the thymus; at the 50 milligram feed level. After about 50 weeks plus a rat died with an angio of the liver at 16.6. There were tumors at 3.

Barry advises that his I.C.I experts tell him that the 16.6 feeding level equates to about the same as inhalation at 50 ppm when related to weight of the rat, lung, respiratory functions, etc. This means that this is no new downward extrapolation of the risk. Their medical people have said, "nothing surprising here."

The French are worried because of the large bottle business they have with water and wine. The French have a much higher per capita usage of the PVC than either the English or the Americans. The French PVC people postulate that if 2 liters per day of wine (the Frenchmen's consumption) is related to the 16 milligram dose of the rat, the rat dosage is 10,000 higher. I interpret that to mean that the Frenchman would have to drink 20,000 bottles per day of wine in order to receive the same exposure of vinyl chloride as the rat at 16 - a challenge. In other words, this level does not indicate that consumer safety is threatened.

Barry made it very clear, first that this information is "free" for us to use as we may wish. He advised that the European governments concerned were promptly advised verbally. Whereupon I indicated that we would immediately notify NIOSH and FDA.

Barry further advised that Maltoni is actually speaking at a Toxicology Conference in Stockholm on Monday, March 10 - exactly at the same time as Barry's call to me. This conference will be well covered by the Swedish press and an American delegation is present headed by Dr. Selikoff. Maltoni is to speak on cancer and chemicals generally. Barry stated that Maltoni does not approve of some of Selikoff's publicity techniques and therefore is not likely to volunteer anything to the Americans. However, he will not hide his findings. Here is what the sponsors told Maltoni: "If you believe it is appropriate to announce these new findings in your paper we cannot stop you. You must also feel entirely free to give out these results as you see it."

Finally, Barry advised that the French producers may call a press conference this week. The others are informing their governments, but at this time not the press. This publicity doesn't change anybody's position - or the situation.

SPI23257

MALTONI AND VCM
March 13, 1975

Immediately upon completing the call with Barry Barnes, I called Jerry Heckman and reported the entire matter to him in detail. I directed him to call NIOSH and FDA and alert them that we had received the information and that there were likely to be press reports emanating from Stockholm or elsewhere in due course. Jerry Heckman has made a record of the time and the people to whom he reported this information at the two agencies.

* * *

On Tuesday, John Lawrence received word from Joe Kalina of "Modern Plastics" Magazine that he had a story from Milan that he wanted to check with us. This cable was filed by McGraw Hill's stringer in Milan who had interviewed Maltoni, apparently on Friday, March 7. The story was cabled in over the weekend. Later in the day, an almost eligible copy (xerox) of the cable was sent over here, but little attention was given to it until the next morning. On Wednesday morning when it was re-typed and we could see what we had, we realized that Maltoni had really given the whole story, plus many editorial-type evaluations to the McGraw Hill man. A copy of this is attached for the record.

Subsequently I obtained permission from Sid Gross to telecopy or mail this story to the VCM/PVC Producers Committee because of its critical importance to them. As indicated on the copy transmitted, the story was clearly identified as "a highly privileged communication" not for distribution or discussion outside the member companies and SPI. The reason I treated this story in this manner was that it was the property of McGraw Hill, given to us as a tremendous favor. It represented a "scoop" for the McGraw Hill weekly publications. Further, the technical details contained in the story were totally in accord with the information given me by Barry Barnes on the phone.

On Wednesday afternoon, we telecopied the story to the Steering Committee members and mailed to the balance of the committee. Jerry Heckman and Bud Lane also received telecopies.

On Wednesday I also talked to Schwartz, a reporter from "Chemical Week", and urged him to contact Heckman for further comments on the situation. In deference to Sid Gross, I did not admit to Schwartz that I had seen the McGraw Hill cable, basing my remarks on the conversation with Barry Barnes. At mid-day I called Barry Barnes to advise him of the story filed from Milan based on a Friday interview with Maltoni. I promised to write Barry a letter relative to this situation, since Maltoni's assurance to his sponsors that he was not planning to make a big issue of this subject do not exactly check with the McGraw Hill cable. Maltoni sounded more like Selikoff than Maltoni. I urged Barry not to say much about this immediately because of the privileged nature of the cable within McGraw Hill.

Meanwhile, On Wednesday, Jerry Heckman was in Williamsburg speaking at a conference on Government and industry toxicologists. By that time our notifications to NIOSH and FDA were all over that conference. Jerry's memo on his participation in that meeting well cover that part of the story. Meanwhile, the grapevine at either NIOSH or FDA was at work and the Louisville Courier Journal was seeking information from us on the story.

RLH:sms

SPI23258