Monsanto

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October 18, 1976

Mr. Cecil Tuck
News Director
KTVI-Television
5915 Berthold Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

Dear Mr. Tuck:

I have just received a report of the verbatim coverage KTVI aired on Oct. 5 during the 10 p.m. news segment regarding Monsanto's PCB announcement. I missed the actual broadcast because I was out of the city on that day.

According to the report, KTVI said the government says PCBs cause cancer. For your information, the government has never said PCBs cause cancer. The only study that has ever suggested even a possible link between PCBs and cancer in humans was the one reported by Mobil Oil Corporation last month, and even Mobil has said its study is very preliminary and that a link between PCBs and cancer has not been established.

We have done a worker health study of our own PCB production workers and have found nothing to suggest a link between PCBs and human cancer. This information was provided to your station in the form of a news release on Sept. 2, 1976.

We submit that there are enough real and documented concerns about the environmental problems that PCBs pose without unnecessarily alarming the public and, in particular, our Krummrich plant employes with inaccurate information regarding human health problems that, thankfully, do not exist.

We would hope that, in the future, KTVI and, indeed, the news media in general, will be very careful when it comes to the use of highly emotional words like cancer.

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I'm not suggesting that it should be avoided -- if it's a fact, you certainly have a responsibility to report it. But if it's not a fact, and it surely isn't in this case, then you have an even greater responsibility not to report it as fact, either directly or by inference!

In reporting that the government says PCBs cause cancer, your newscast has unnecessarily scared a lot of people who at one time or another have worked with these products.

The power and believability of television news is well documented. Please keep this in mind when you treat future controversies.

Thank you.

Cordially,

D. R. Bishop
Director, Public Relations
Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co.

DRB:smt