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INSURANCE COVERAGE LITIGATION

bcc: D. Woods, W.D Crosson

W. D. Crosson - A3NC - 4-3860 - St. Louis

March 5, 1981

3/13 Held for a meeting with Dan & Sweets (Dan will make arrangements)

cc: D. R. Bishop -A3NB
J. F. Hussey -A3NB
G. C. Rankey -A3NC
G. Roush, M.D.-G2WA

TO : C. A. Sweets
A3SA

Dan Bishop asked me to respond to your memo of March 2, since I recently conducted a communications survey of the Monsanto Environmental Network, and am the editor of the "green sheet," the EPS Monthly Report. Communications on occupational safety and health are a part of my responsibilities, and were specifically addressed in the survey. In analyzing the survey results, I have also made use of data from outside opinion research, and a brief exposition of my conclusions follows.

The "environmental network" is a partly official, partly unofficial, group which receives environmental information through Distribution List 218. Persons in the network officially are members of Monte Throdahl's Environmental Policy Staff (including DMEH), the OpUnit Directors of both Environmental Operations and Public Relations, members of staff departments such as Manufacturing Coordination, Corporate Engineering, Law, and Public Affairs, whose responsibilities include environmental protection and occupational safety and health issues, and plant managers. Others in the network are included because at some point they expressed an interest in receiving the mailings. This group includes people with a wide spectrum of jobs, from manufacturing directors to plant communicators and industrial hygienists. Mr. Throdahl's guidance has been not to "sell" EPS publications, but not to hide them either.

In early January, I sent a mail survey to the network (569 names), and received 302 responses (53% return). Attached is a summary of the results of those questions having to do with internal communications issues.

One might reasonably ask if network opinion reflects accurately other opinions of the chemical industry. I believe they do. For example, in the 1980 Corporate Priorities Report, the firm of Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc., reported that 75% of the "blue collar" public considered exposure to long-term health hazards to be a serious issue in worker health. This finding is similar to the 1978-79 Monsanto research that showed some 68% of the company's wage employees were concerned over exposure to dangerous substances. External opinions in the area of worker protection reflect the same concern: in the 1980 Priorities Report the public ranks the chemical industry second only to the nuclear industry as doing poorly in observing laws and guidelines on worker safety.

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On a more positive note, however, both the corporate issues study and the environmental network study showed employees have a great deal of faith in the company's communications efforts. This favorable opinion was also reflected in the finding in the recent Sirota and Alper Associates, Inc., study that communications within Monsanto concerning safety are rated highly. (Concerning the Sirota study, it should be noted that restricting information flow, the "need to know" approach, was identified as a communications problem area.) Making a direct comparison of "health" vs. "safety" is subject to some error, due to differing perceptions of terms, yet the responses in the research I have reviewed are so similar that I feel I can safely draw conclusions.

I believe the company has both an opportunity and challenge. We enjoy good credibility with our workers, who are generally disposed to feel we try and tell them as much as we can about workplace health and safety issues. Yet we have been clearly told that more information is desired on the specific topic of the potential chronic health hazards associated with working in our plants. In short, our people want information, and they'll accept what we tell them. This is an ideal position for any organization to be in if it wants to affect opinion change. Therefore, we in the environmental communications group strongly subscribe to the philosophy articulated by Dr. Roush, i.e., candid, frank disclosure, as appropriate, to the broadest possible employee audience. Such an effort is certainly in line with our corporate employee relations objective.

W. Dav[illegible] Crosson

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INTERNAL Communications

Network Opinion: 99.3% say Monsanto should tell employees of the company's worker health and environmental protection activities.

98.6% say we should tell employees of the potential dangers of chemicals.

97 % say we should tell employees of research into chemical hazards.

94.7% say it's important that we inform employees when we seem to go against "popular opinion."

82.2% say it's important to explain to employees our stand against "activists."

How well are we doing?

82.7% say employees believe what the company tells them.

81.8% say the company tries to keep employees fully informed.

Yet, 22.2% don't agree new employees are adequately told of chemical hazards, and 9.9% did not answer the question.

On a personal basis, the network said:

97.3% feel it's important to have information about what's going on in the company.

84.5% agree the company tries to keep them fully informed.

A bare majority, 53%, said more money should be spent on internal communications.

(Note: 61.2% said their budgets could not be adjusted to fund increased environmental communications.)

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