[redacted] Ford - St. Louis

June 9, [redacted] Mr. E. V. John

BRUSSELS

Mr. Mi[redacted] A. Blatz

Dear Mi[redacted]

Wanted to bring you up to date on the current controversy in the U.S. about the alleged contamination of the environment via polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). These are the Aroclors marketed by Organic and we are the only U.S. producer.

I believe [redacted] Wheeler visited with you some during the recent trip by [redacted] and others to interview scientists in Sweden, Holland and the U.K. Here is some additional information.

This story first broke in the U.S. when the work of a Dr. Risebrough at the University of California in Berkeley was reported in the San Francisco Chronicle. Although the writer gave us four days to handle an inquiry, one member of Organic management panicked and started stalling on our answer -- hence the February 24 story had nothing from us. This generated a similar story in the San Francisco Examiner (clippings enclosed) and some Los Angeles media, plus three "nut letters" from the West Coast. Since then we have handled lengthy interviews with several West Coast government agencies and a "canned editorial" based on the Chronicle story appeared in several papers (see Gainesville, Fla., clipping).

Since February 25 we have been using a position statement which has been refined slightly. A copy is enclosed. This was used with inquiries from Time, National Observer and the New York Times. To date, none of these national media have run a story.

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After a lull, the matter came up again last month when the State of Wisconsin held hearings to ban the use of DDT. The pesticide opponents did not mention PCB, but our "friends" from the National Agricultural Chemicals Association did drag in PCB as a red herring to take pressure off DDT (clippings of this testimony enclosed). Needless to say, our Ag division has thoroughly chewed out officials at NACA.

Future events in the U.S. are hard to predict. California plans to hold DDT hearings and PCB will probably be mentioned there.

I think events in Europe could move faster. Evidently Sweden is seriously considering some kind of ban on PCB, following its legislation against DDT. The Monsanto team from the U.S. also visited other PCB producers in Europe and there is a tentative beginning toward some type of joint cooperation between the companies.

That's about it, Mike. The Organic man in Brussels should be fairly well informed. The "PCB team" here in St. Louis consists of Howard Bergen, functional fluids business director (he takes care of reporting things to the plasticizer segment); Bill Richard, Organic research manager, and Elmer Wheeler from Medical.

Tom C. Ford

TCF:sfh
Enclosures

xonicle 2/24/69
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Statement
isc state Journal 5/8/69
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