

HILL AND KNOWLTON, INC.

**633 THIRD AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017
212-697.5600**

Memo to: VCM-PVC Producers Group

Date: January 15, 1976

From: VCM-PVC Communications Committee

Copies: See below

Subject: Status Report of "Action Program" Activities

We want to bring you up-to-date on the status of activities connected with your "Action Program" in advance of the full VCM-PVC Producers Group meeting in Washington on the 23rd. We will provide further details then and will be glad to answer your questions and receive your suggestions to build momentum for the program at that time.

TRAINING SESSIONS UNDERWAY

Volunteer candidates for training in television and radio techniques from five companies completed the first of two training sessions on January 8 and 9. Seven members completed the course; one was called back on urgent business and did not complete the radio portion of the training. The companies who sent representatives were: Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.; B. F. Goodrich Chemical Co.; Continental Oil Company (Chemical); Diamond Shamrock Chemical Co. and Great American Chemical Company. (A list of attendees is attached.)

SPI staff, Hill and Knowlton trainers and the professional broadcast consultants who participated in the training all felt that we had made an excellent beginning.

In critiques following their work with the trainees, the participating consultants -- Douglas Edwards of CBS-TV network news and Lou Woods of NBC-TV network ("Today" show regular), as well as the NBC radio newsmen -- conceded that the subject matter could be volatile under questioning by adversary broadcast and media people, but they encouraged the candidates to speak out with the expertise they demonstrated during the session.

The training simulated the major types of broadcast news and interview situations, including the most hostile types of confrontations (for example, with hysterical, over-reacting advocates who often appear on talk shows). The trainees had to learn to think on their feet and to make positive points in the midst of intensive verbal bombardment.

SPI staff, a representative of your Communications Committee who attended a good portion of the training and H&K were able to observe and isolate the areas that will be the hardest to handle on the air. Trainees were exposed to the most severe negative impressions, feelings, opinions and fears that may be present in the less well-informed

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general public. They also had to wrestle with explaining the industry's position -- often involving complex technical data -- in lay language in the extremely limiting time frame that is inherent in broadcast communications.

To a man, the trainees left the two-day session exhausted, but all agreed that the experience was challenging and invaluable. They will form the nucleus, with others trained in the second session, of editorial briefing teams who will meet with editorial writers, managing editors, news editors, consumer and environmental writers at newspapers and magazines, and significant broadcast outlets in major news centers across the country. An SPI staff member also will be on the team to field the more general type of questions that fall outside of the VCM-PVC situation. H&K will organize the entire effort and set up the meetings, brief the teams and then, de-brief them after the meetings.

For the second training session, we urgently need additional volunteers from other companies. We especially need representation in the medical and management areas and at least one additional technical expert.

RECENT PRESS COVERAGE

Recent focus in the press has been on the EPA and FDA proposed standards, the B. F. Goodrich press conference, plus articles rippling from these linking new statistical data supporting the medical community's increasing concentration on environmental factors as cancer-causing agents.

In the EPA situation, H&K's New York and Washington staffs, with the counsel of Jerry Heckman's and Bill Ruckelshaus' staffs, prepared a public statement that appeared in a number of news and newsletter stories, helping to provide balanced coverage.

Rolling Stone did a major story documenting the events surrounding the death of Goodrich employee Charles Arthur. The ripple from this article was seen in a syndicated story by Mary McGrory, whose home-base is the Washington Star but whose columns are carried in the Washington Star Syndicate's 150 papers. Responses to Ms. McGrory's articles were solicited from third party sources as well as from consultant Harry DuBois. DuBois sent a letter (a copy of which is attached) to Ms. McGrory with copies forwarded to the Washington Star Syndicate as well as to the editor of the New York Post, which carried her column. Other third party experts contacted are considering responses. In addition, Ralph Harding contacted Ms. McGrory and detailed the industry's position.

As a case in point, this underlines the need for developing third party experts who will come forward and help clarify issues as they develop. We need additional third party candidates for this kind of role, and request that the membership provide these for future reference.

The New York Times published a Sunday piece raising the question of whether the industry "cried wolf" when it vigorously opposed the original OSHA standards and yet were able to develop new control technology in a relatively short period of time with no resulting, major industry dislocation.

A rash of articles appeared in Washington papers and broadcast media reporting on alleged dangers to life from fires in which PVC wire wrap is burned.

"CBS Reports" has contacted SPI with a request for updating on VCM-PVC as part of their preparation for a follow-up on "The American Way of Cancer," scheduled tentatively for airing in mid-year. SPI, H&K and selected trainees will handle the briefing in New York.

"CBS Reports" and other major news vehicles undoubtedly will continue to follow the regulatory process involving both EPA and FDA.

SEIZING THE INITIATIVE IN THE PRESS AND BROADCAST MEDIA

We intend to call upon the spokesmen who have undergone training, as appropriate, in initiating positive exposition of our positions on important VC-related issues with the press and broadcast media. These spokesmen also will supplement the traditional SPI quick response mechanism that has carried the brunt of the industry's position in the past.

There is one thing we must keep in mind as we enter the critical period of hearings where "spot news" is sure to pop up. The sooner we can get out and button-hole important editorial and broadcast news people in the major news centers and tell our story, the sooner we will reach the goal of achieving a balanced reporting of events as they unfold. Until this is done, no effort by professional PR people will save the day from a bombastic headline, a misinterpreted industry statement or an overplayed, provocative activist statement. This is the guts of the "Action Program" that we supported and began trying to implement on October 1.

PRESS POSITION PAPER BEING CLEARED

H&K has prepared a major position paper recounting the history of the VCM-PVC situation and laying out the industry's positions. It has passed through preliminary SPI staff clearance and is now undergoing final approvals. This paper will be of significant use in briefing the major news outlets, and also will help all of us brief and respond to local press and broadcast media.

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GOVERNMENT SEMINAR

We urge you to respond immediately to the memorandum announcing the government seminar to be held February 4 and 5 in Washington. This activity is essential if we are to effectively marshal our resources to get our message through to our legislative representatives. If you have not received the memorandum, please contact E.S. Nuspliger at SPI right away.

We look forward to further discussion of your "Action Program" at the producers' meeting in Washington later this month.

Sincerely,


Robert L. Ferrante

RLF:jmv
Attachments

cc: R. L. Harding
J. R. Lawrence
E. S. Nuspliger
J. H. Heckman
W. A. Durbin
J. M. Kiss
M. M. Swetonic
D. W. White
J. R. McLeod
J. Blizin

The names of the candidates for the second TV and Radio training session are attached, as well as the names of those who attended the first session. Even though, numerically, we have enough candidates to schedule the second training, your Communications Committee recommends recruiting additional medical (two more needed) and technical (two more needed) experts to round out the composition of our editorial briefing team.

ATTENDEES

January 8/9 Training Sessions

RICHARD D. SAVAGE

Director of Industry Affairs

B. F. Goodrich Chemical Co.

Area of Expertise: Administration/Management

DR. R. A. KRUEGER

Director of Research and Development

B. F. Goodrich Chemical Co.

DR. GERALD MANTELL

Director of Research and Development

Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.

Area of Expertise: Packaging

JEROME H. HECKMAN

SPI Legal Counsel

Keller and Heckman

O. PAUL COHEN (TV Session Only)

Vice President of Research and Development

Great American Chemical Co.

Area of Expertise: General and Non-Medical Tech.
as reducing exposures, etc.

DAVID A. KUHN

Director of Biomedical and Environmental Affairs

Continental Oil Co.

DR. H. EVERSON

Director, Safety and Environmental Engineering

Diamond Shamrock Chemical Company

Area of Expertise: Technical -- USHA (chemical plants)
and Environment -- General

R. P. BECKER

Manager, PVC Applications and Technical Service

Diamond Shamrock Chemical Company

Area of Expertise: Technical -- use of PVC
(migration to foods)

CANDIDATES

SECOND TRAINING SESSION

Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.

John Baar -- Technical Manager, Manufacturing
Dr. A. Ross Adams -- General Manager, Plastics Division
Raymond Schenck, Esq. -- Attorney
Richard Fleming -- Group Vice President (corporate)

Diamond Shamrock Chemical Co.

Dr. R.W. McBurney -- Medical Director
Harry E. Connors -- Vice President, General Manager, Plastics Division

Great American Chemical Co.

Dr. A.W. Fuhrman -- Vice President

Keysor-Century Corporation

To be named

Robintech Incorporated

John E. Ertel -- General Manager - PVC Resins

Shell Chemical Company

Kenneth L. Spalding -- Business Representative - Vinyl Chloride Monomer

Union Carbide Corporation

John Hollingsworth -- Operations Manager