

Monsanto

J. W. Manley
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12/13/79

Bcc on 12/14 to
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MONTE C. THRODAHL
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December 13, 1979

Mr. Stuart E. Eizenstat
Assistant to the President for
Domestic Affairs and Policy
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Eizenstat:

We were somewhat surprised to read a news article in the December 12, 1979, issue of the Washington Star describing the formation of a government task force to investigate the effect of exposure to the ingredients in Agent Orange. The article included a reference to an investigation of employee exposures at three specified geographic sites, two of which (Nitro, West Virginia, and Sauget, Illinois) appear to be Monsanto manufacturing plants.

This letter is to bring to your attention a series of epidemiology studies sponsored by Monsanto which have been underway for some time at both sites to determine the chronic effects, if any, of exposure to certain chemicals which were used in the manufacture of the pesticide referred to as "Agent Orange." (It should be noted that such chemicals have not been manufactured at the Nitro, West Virginia, site since 1969, nor at the Sauget, Illinois, site since 1970.) A report of one of three studies recently completed at the Nitro, West Virginia, site is attached for your information. As you see, it indicates no adverse long-term effects as a result of exposure to the chemicals as a result of an industrial accident in 1949. This study has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Occupational Medicine, and prepublication copies have been sent to NIOSH, OSHA and EPA. The results of the other studies will be available within the next 60 days, and they will be made public in a similar fashion.

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In view of the considerable effort which has already been expended in gathering this information, including the involvement of NIOSH and Air Force personnel, along with outside consultants and Monsanto's own epidemiologists, we believe that this information should be of assistance to the interagency working group which you announced yesterday, and suggest that the present studies be completed and reviewed before any additional epidemiological work at these two sites is contemplated by the government.

Monsanto will be delighted to cooperate with the inter-agency study in any way we are able or to provide data we have collected to an overall study of this important issue.

Sincerely,

James H. Thompson
J. H. Thompson

MCT/mw

Attachment

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