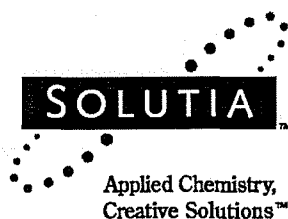


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REVISED VERSION
May 30, 2000

Ms. Katrina vanden Heuvel, Editor
Ms. Judith Long, Copy Editor
The Nation
33 Irving Place
New York, NY 10003

Dear Ms. Vanden Heuvel and Ms. Long:

The recent article "What Monsanto Knew" [May 29, 2000] presents a one-sided and very misleading version of issues relating to Monsanto's, and now Solutia's, former polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) facility in Alabama. Apparently the reporter was given historical Monsanto documents by attorneys representing plaintiffs in litigation against Monsanto/Solutia, but selective quotes and the lack of context result in an incomplete and distorted picture.

Isolated quotations are used in a manner intended to put the company in a bad light. Other parts of the same documents – conveniently ignored – show Monsanto's commitment to responsible action. For example, the 1969 Monsanto memo, which the author neglects to state was a draft, recommends this "Course of Action":

Based on the information available today the only recommendation we can honestly make is respond responsibly admitting that there is growing evidence of environmental contamination by the higher chlorinated biphenyls and take action as new data is generated to correct the problem.

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From the beginning, Monsanto's responses to the finding of PCBs in the environment were swift and effective. Monsanto dealt with the emerging issues at the highest levels of the company, committing personnel and resources to learn as much as possible about PCBs and their environmental and potential health effects. Never before had a company responded as quickly and as fully to environmental concerns. The company cut off sales to applications which could lead to releases to the environment; established stringent control practices; sponsored research on potential environmental and health effects; and worked closely with state and federal regulatory agencies, including in Alabama.

Despite a federal government report that eliminating PCBs would cause severe disruptions in electrical distribution, Monsanto committed to stop making PCBs as soon as substitutes were developed. Voluntarily it stopped making PCBs in Anniston in 1971 and ceased making PCBs altogether in 1977, two years before the EPA banned PCB manufacture. During the last 35 years, Monsanto and now Solutia have responded appropriately to PCB issues, based on sound science, effective clean-up measures, and response to regulatory concerns.

In 1993, when early information suggested that PCBs were present in fish in Choccolocco Creek and might be present in surface water leaving the Monsanto site, the company began an extensive investigation, which led to a program to acquire residential property for management and control of the PCBs. This program generally provided owners about twice the appraised value of the property, and it did not require that any legal releases be signed.

We also offered to relocate two area churches. Bethel Missionary Baptist Church worked cooperatively with the company to relocate to a new church facility, with funding and relocation assistance provided by Monsanto, and the congregation is now worshipping in a beautiful new church. Mars Hill Missionary Baptist Church sued Monsanto, but that case has also been settled in a way intended to assure that the church could relocate to a site of its choice with a new facility comparable to Bethel Church's facility, after attorney's fees and expenses.

Two Anniston families used as illustrations of persons supposedly adversely affected by PCBs have refused generous relocation offers. Solutia still stands ready to purchase those properties and is confident the residents could find equivalent or better housing if they accepted the offers.

The Nation implies that health problems complained of by a family featured in the story are associated with PCBs. While we understand the family's health concerns, there is no medical or scientific basis to suggest that exposure to environmental levels of PCBs cause adverse human health effects.

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Studies even among persons who worked daily with PCBs, only report skin conditions and possible elevations in some liver enzymes, which disappear if exposure ends. And among the largest group of plaintiffs suing Solutia, no medical expert claims that PCBs caused a specific health problem for a specific individual.

Since 1993, Solutia has done more than \$30 million of remediation in Anniston. Plans for additional work await approval from the state and federal regulatory agencies, and Solutia is extensively investigating nearby waterways. We will continue our efforts to manage and control PCBs in Anniston -- and we are working to find fair ways to resolve the many issues facing the community and us. We are convinced, however, that these issues can be resolved only addressed in a fair and balanced manner. We do not feel that your article contributed to that process.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Kaley, II
Director, Environmental Affairs

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