PRESS QUERY

COMPANY (Operating or Parent): MIC

SUBJECT: PCBs

REPORTER & MEDIA: Larry Marion
Business Week (Wash. Bureau)

DATE & TIME: Aug. 31, 1976 - 1:15 p.m.

QUERY & RESPONSE:

X Corporate PR Bulletin Board
X J. T. Nolan
X W. R. Mulhall
X S. Pickard-Washington, D. C.
X J. F. Hussey-Washington, D. C.
X New York Public Relations
X Brussels Public Relations
X MAP PR
X MCP PR
X MIC PR
X MP&P PR
X MTC PR
X INT'L PR
X W. R. Corey
X F. J. Fitzgerald
X E. H. Harbison
X J. E. McKee
X J. T. Nolan
X G. Potter
X G. Roush
X J. C. Weber
X W. W. Withers
X G. F. Barton

The reporter is doing an in-depth story on all aspects of the PCB issue.

Q. Dr. Roush, how many people at Monsanto are typically involved in the production of PCBs?

A. Less than 30 on continuous basis - 4 shifts to cover weekends.

Q. In view of the recent Mobil Oil Corporation report which suggests the first possible link between PCBs and cancer in humans, has Monsanto done any epidemiological studies of its own PCB production workers and, if so, have you found anything that would link PCBs and cancer?

A. We have a study underway -- but it's not completed. We have looked at the records of some 300 current employes and former employes who we have identified as having worked in the PCB production unit. Of those 300 employes who have been involved with PCBs over the years

SOURCE OF ANSWER:

HANDLED BY:

(dating back to 1936 when the unit first became operational) we know of 50 who have died and we have reviewed their death certificates.

We have not found a significant excess of cancers in this population, but we did see an excess in lung cancer compared to the national average among those who have died.

Q. What about the people still working at the plant?

A. We have no lung cancer or any other type of cancer that I know of.

Q. Do you have any information or records on those who have left the plant?

A. We have records on all workers presently at the plant. Most of those who left worked there less than a year so their data wouldn't significantly change our findings. We are, nevertheless, trying to locate those who left but it will take a long time.

Q. Regarding the excess of lung cancer, what figures are we talking about?

A. We have observed seven cases of lung cancer out of 50 deaths and, based on the national average, we would have expected 2.7. You must remember that this is rough data and it has not been corrected for age. This could make a significant difference. We don't know about smoking habits or other factors yet either. What is needed now is a controlled study on these lung cancers.

You should also remember that every epidemiological study that I've ever seen shows an excess of some kind of death simply because it is a mortality study, i.e. people die for some reason.

An epidemiological study may be significant and it may well not be.

Q. Mr. Harbison, in talking to electrical industry manufacturers, several of my colleagues and I have been told that Monsanto will cease production of PCBs by year-end 1977 and work off inventories until they are exhausted in about May or June, 1978. Has Monsanto, indeed, told its customers that it will cease production by the end of 1977?

A. No Larry, we haven't. You may recall that back in January of this year at a meeting with the EPA in Washington Monsanto Vice President Jack Fitzgerald announced that we intended to and [illegible] indeed

anxious to go out of the business as soon as the industry could find replacement products. We have literally spent the year working with and trying to push the industry on to as rapid a conversion timetable as possible. From your research into the situation, I'm sure you understand the problems confronting them particularly in terms of fire resistance.

We have not yet set a date with industry. We are presently re-working the whole PCB program to assure that we are up to date on their capabilities and their needs.

Our current plans call for us to go out of business in the last quarter of 1977, sooner if possible. We'd like to go out tomorrow but that wouldn't be responsible because I don't know what they would do for products in the interim.

Q. Representatives of the industry have told me that they doubt they will have viable alternates tested and ready to go in less than an 18-22 month time frame. What's your reaction to that?

A. I would be amazed if Monsanto were to continue in this business beyond year-end 1977, and we'd like to be out a lot sooner.

Source: Dr. G. Roush
Mr. E. H. Harbison

Handled by: D. R. Bishop