Medical Department

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WARF Institute--PCB

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I received a call from John Birdsall, vice president of WARF, telling me that Don Mount's committee investigating pesticides and PCB's in Lake Michigan was having a meeting in Chicago Tuesday and Wednesday of this past week, July 21 and 22. He asked if there were any developments on PCB that he, Birdsall, could discuss at the meeting.

I told him of our recent news release and Monsanto's program for controlling escape of PCB's to the environment which he related to the committee.

I tried to reach Don Mount so that I could send him care of his hotel in Chicago a copy of the material that John Mason recently provided the MIT studies group at Williams. I was unable to catch up with Mount as he was on his way to Chicago but sent him the MIT enclosures per my letter of July 23.

Birdsall called me again on Thursday to tell me that Mount and the committee members in attendance in Chicago were surprised and pleased to learn of the Monsanto program.

More important, the Mount committee has received a directive from the "super" committee made up of the governors of the states draining into Lake Michigan telling the Mount committee to proceed posthaste with additional investigations of the PCB's.

I believe several sub-committees were established one of which includes Birdsall as chairman and members Lloyd Lueschow and Carlow Fetterolf of the Wisconsin and Michigan Departments of Natural Resources respectively. This sub-committee was given the assignment of initiating a letter survey to all industries discharging to Lake Michigan to determine who uses PCB, how much, what for, how much they may be loosing to the Lake or its tributaries.

Birdsall asked if you could meet with his sub-committee to help them in selecting what industries and companies should be surveyed. This might then help reduce the number of companies to be contacted.

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I told him that I doubted if we could tell him anything more specific about PCB's than we already have but that I am sure Monsanto would want to cooperate in any reasonable way and that you would be in touch with him. Birdsall said also that Mount is going to request $50 to $100,000 from the FWQA to make a "synoptic study of Lake Michigan". The purpose would be to embark on a grand scale sampling in water and fish to obtain quantities of pesticides (and PCB's) which would make identification simpler.

WARF is one of the laboratories which will bid on the subcontract to conduct the study if FWQA makes the money available to Mount. If WARF gets the contract they would like to discuss whether Monsanto would be interested in part of the contract relating to mass spec identification.

Another subject discussed with Birdsall is covered in a separate memo.

Elmer P. Wheeler

EPW:ju