



B. F. Goodrich Chemical Company

A DIVISION OF THE B. F. GOODRICH COMPANY

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December 19, 1975

Mr. Malcolm D. Hartley
Editorial Page Editor
The Journal
1657 Broadway
Lorain, Ohio 44052

Dear Mr. Hartley:

The lead editorial in the December 10 issue of The Journal was read with interest here at B.F. Goodrich Chemical. We were, of course, gratified to note that you recognized our progress in reduction of exposure to vinyl chloride at all five of our domestic PVC plants.

Your comment in reference to safety conditions in overseas plants was not entirely accurate. The panelists at our New York press briefing indicated that progress had been made in our foreign plants in containment of vinyl chloride--notably in Canada and Australia. Vinyl chloride standards abroad are generally much less rigid than in the United States. Nevertheless, our goal in all phases of our operation where vinyl chloride is present is to contain it to U. S. levels--even in those ventures where we may be a minority participant and agreement by foreign partners is necessary.

The benefits our company offers relating to illness, accident, or death are, we believe, equal to any of the industry. As such benefits have increased through the years, our company has kept pace. Human life is indeed precious, as you state, and any such work-related tragedy is treated on the same basis throughout our company--regardless of its cause.

Another point we wish to make may seem to be minor, but it is essential to a complete understanding of the subject under consideration. Your second paragraph refers to PVC continuing "to claim victims . . ." Polyvinyl chloride, or PVC, has never claimed a victim. The substance you meant to refer to is vinyl chloride which is the basic chemical used in manufacture of PVC. It is important that your readers understand that PVC, which is used broadly in products with which they are in daily contact, is perfectly safe--the hazard lies in the manufacturing process.

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Finally, although we agree that The Journal has devoted much in-depth coverage to this subject, we feel much of such coverage has been alarmist. For example, your headline following our press briefing read, "Vinyl Chloride: More Cancer Deaths to Come . . . BFG Program Tames a Profitable Killer". Other leading newspapers reporting on the facts presented at our news briefing last week took a more dispassionate tone as follows: "Goodrich Says PVC Output, Safety Up" (Louisville Courier Journal); "Goodrich Curbs Chloride Hazard . . . Goodrich Cuts Exposure to Chemical Linked to Cancer" (New York Times).

We understand the importance of this story to you and to our community. We only hope you will give consideration to a more even-handed, balanced treatment in future coverage. In our view, as you have informed your readers, you have perhaps unduly alarmed them.

We would be glad to discuss these comments with you in person at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

R. B. Downey, Manager
Public Relations & Advertising

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