Roush/Business Week Interview.....

Business Week: Dr. Roush, in view of the recent Mobil Oil Corporation report which suggests the first possible link between PCBs and human cancer, I would like to know what Monsanto is doing or has done in the way of similar studies with its own PCB production workers and what you have learned from this work?

Dr. Roush: We are currently involved in a detailed epidemiological study of employes and former employes of the PCB production unit of our William G. Krummrich plant at Sauget, Illinois. The Krummrich plant, located just south of East St. Louis, is the sole U.S. manufacturing site for Monsanto-produced PCBs.

We would not normally release clinical or medical data from a still-ongoing study, particularly one as complex as this, without first subjecting it to full scientific investigation and review. Any attempt to reach conclusions from preliminary data at this stage of development could be easily misinterpreted, would almost certainly be misleading and could well prove incorrect in the final analysis. With this in mind and because I am obviously aware that the

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Mobil report has generated concern, I am willing to share with you our early findings, some of which I must re-emphasize are very preliminary.

First, I can tell you that we found no cases of either malignant melonoma or pancreatic cancer among employes who are or were involved in the production of PCB products. If either of these cancers were related to PCBs, as the Mobil report tends to suggest, then it would follow that we would have also seen these malignancies in a worker population some four times as large as that covered in the Mobil study. The fact that we have found no cases of either of these cancers is a pretty strong indication that what Mobil found is not related to PCBs.

Because we found no melonoma or pancreatic cancer it was very easy to extract this information. The study, itself, will not be completed for 12 to 18 months. It involves a thorough review of the clinical records of more than 300 employes and former employes who we have been able to identify as having worked in the PCB production unit at the Krummrich plant, dating back to 1936 when this unit first became operational. In addition to clinical records, we have also reviewed the death certificates of 50 former

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PCB employes that we have been able to locate.

While much additional work needs to be done, the preliminary analysis of the death certificates, done by an outside epidemiologist retained by Monsanto to review the data, has revealed the following additional information:

2. The mortality rate for lung cancer was higher than expected when compared to National Cancer Institute data for the nation as a whole. Based on the results of the study to date and all available information, we have concluded that the lung cancers were not caused by or related to PCB exposure. Indeed, this conclusion was supported by the outside epidemiologist who said (and I quote) "this preliminary study does not indicate dose-response relationships, (ie., PCB exposure) either for all causes of death or for lung cancer."

So at this point I can say that we have found nothing in the study of our own workers, or for that matter in our long-term feeding studies with rats, that would indicate a carcinogentic response from PCBs. I can assure you that if Monsanto thought PCBs were a carcinogen,

we would shut down production immediately, the electrical power supply industry's needs notwithstanding.

Business Week: How many cases of lung cancer did you find?

Dr. Roush: Seven lung cancers have been identified.

Business Week: How many would you have expected to find, based on the national average?

Dr. Roush: Two to three (?).

Business Week: Well that sounds like a substantial excess to me. If these lung cancers are not related to PCBs, what might they be related to? How can you explain this kind of excess?

Dr. Roush: It might represent an excess, it might not. That's one of the things we are trying to determine. At this point we don't know what, if anything, the lung cancer is related to. You'll recall that I said early in this discussion that much work remains to be done before we can reach any further scientifically-based conclusions regarding the raw findings that have surfaced at this very preliminary point in the study.

For example, we have not yet been able to compare these findings with the lung cancer mortality rate for the East St. Louis area, nor have we been able to determine the smoking habits of these workers. In many cases, we don't even know what their prior or post Monsanto work experience and exposure may have been.

We do know that cigarette smoking is responsible for at least 80% of all lung cancer and we also know that the mortality rate for cancer is higher in the metropolitan East St. Louis area than it is for the nation as a whole.

We intend to publish the findings of this study when it is completed and I'll see that you get a copy. In the meantime, this is really all I can tell you.

(Other possible questions...)

Business Week: 1) Did you find any other types of cancer, if so what types and how many of each?

2) Could you describe the work still remaining and tell me how you will proceed and explain why it will take so long?

3) What about the feeding studies with rats?

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