

Monsanto

AUG 8 1979

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DATE : August 7, 1979
PROJECT : Revised Nitro Position
REFERENCE : Statement

TO : C. F. Callis - B2SA
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F. J. Holzapfel - B2SB
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Attached, F.Y.I., is the revised position statement we intend to go with as our first line of defense when Dr. Selikoff issues his report.

Please destroy the previous statement dated July 13 and replace it with this version.


Dan R. Bishop

DRB:ec

Attachment

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PREPAREDNESS STATEMENT RE: SELIKOFF/MT. SINAI HEALTH REPORT

Monsanto Company has just received a summary of the Mt. Sinai medical team's report and it will be evaluated by the company's epidemiologists and medical staff before we can responsibly comment in detail on the findings.

Such an evaluation, along with appropriate "peer review" by medical and scientific authorities in the field of industrial medicine, must be made before any medical conclusions can be drawn about the past or present health and safety environment at Monsanto's Nitro plant.

In the meantime Monsanto remains confident that the work environment at Nitro is safe, that the health of its workers is not being compromised and that effective measures are in place to protect and monitor the health and welfare of the Nitro plant community.

We can make the following specific comments on the Mt. Sinai report based on information collected and analyzed recently, along with historical health data earlier made public by Monsanto.

First, in regard to dioxin effects, a recent analysis of mortality rates of the 121 employees exposed to dioxin in an accidental release of that material in 1949 indicates that there is no statistical variance between the mortality rates of the plant workers and the American public as a whole.

Second, the Mt. Sinai report refers to the incidence of bladder tumors associated with exposure to para-amino-biphenyl (PAB), an intermediate chemical that has not been handled at Nitro since the early 1950's.

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Detailed information on PAB-related health effects has been publicly reported on by Monsanto and medically tracked by the company and independent medical authorities since the health problem was first pin-pointed in the 1950's.

Since that time, Monsanto has provided special medical care to all employees who may have come in contact with the product, whether or not any medical abnormalities resulted from exposure to PAB.

This program includes regular medical examinations and treatment, special lifetime medical benefits, and special compensation equal to the benefits provided under workmen's compensation statutes in West Virginia.

Third, the other health effects referred to in the Mt. Sinai report, aside from those related to dioxin and PAB exposure, have not been evident from the routine physical examinations conducted at the plant over the past three decades.

Therefore, these alleged effects require careful analysis and comparison with a detailed evaluation now underway of all available employee health and workplace data.

Fourth, all workplace exposures, chemical emissions and effluent discharges from the Nitro plant are in compliance with West Virginia and federal environmental regulations. Beyond compliance with regulatory requirements, Monsanto's environmental and industrial hygiene program sets rigid standards for workplace practices not

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currently covered by state or federal regulations. For these reasons, the company does not believe that any of its manufacturing operations constitute a health hazard to its employees or to the citizens of the surrounding community.

It furthermore should be understood that the Mt. Sinai health study, in which about 235 Monsanto employees participated, is but one of three separate and distinct studies being made of the work environment at the Nitro plant.

In June, 1979, a medical team from the University of Cincinnati's Institute of Environmental Health, headed by Dr. Raymond Suskind, examined approximately 435 retired and present employees for the effects of dioxin exposure resulting from a manufacturing process that was in operation between 1948 and 1969.

The results of that study, in which data on exposed workers are being compared to Nitro plant employees working in other plant operations, are expected to be published by the Institute later this year.

In addition, Monsanto's Department of Medicine & Environmental Health, using the data analysis resources of Stanford Research Institute, is currently analyzing health and work records of present and former employees at Nitro. Work on that analysis began in 1978.

The study, a part of Monsanto's new, corporate-wide, medical recording-keeping system, encompasses all available health and work-place data collected by the company on its employees in recent decades.

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When this information is integrated into the computerized system, it will make possible the most detailed analysis ever attempted of health patterns at Nitro and other Monsanto plants worldwide.

In this regard, Monsanto has asked Mt. Sinai to share with the company as much medical data as possible from the examinations conducted of the 235 Nitro employees so that it can be compared with the evaluation of the wider plant community of over 600 men and women.

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