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Ralston Purina

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With all of the communications on Ralston Purina I thought I should bring you up-to-date on the recent return of one drum of Pydraul 90E by Ralston's Battle Creek, Michigan plant. As a matter of routine, Bill Slowikowski, our salesman in Kalamazoo, called the Battle Creek plant when he learned of the return of the drum of 90E (Bill did not know anything about our problems with Ralston). He talked with a Mr. Keith Meyers and learned that Meyers had received a letter from Ralston headquarters saying that the new Pydraul fluids might have PCB contamination. When Bill phoned me to report this, I filled him in a bit on the Ralston-Monsanto situation and told him not to call Ralston back on the subject.

After discussing the situation with you, I phoned Paul Branch of Ralston's corporate engineering group as we agreed. Paul reported that the above mentioned letter discussing the possibility of PCB contamination was sent out over his signature. However, he said he did not write the letter -- it was written by the quality control group of the grocery products division, who make cereals for human consumption as well as dog and cat chows, etc. Paul hinted that the Vice President of the grocery products division was behind writing the letter. Obviously, the grocery products people jumped to conclusions on the samples of 90E that their analytical group (and ours) was testing.

Paul indicated that Ralston plans to stop using Pydraul in all hydraulic systems and return to petroleum oil since, in his judgment as well as others, the fire hazards were very minimal. The air compressors on Pydraul 90E are somewhat of a problem in terms of returning to oil and they have not decided as yet what to do.

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