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The University of Wisconsin

WATER CHEMISTRY LABORATORY
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706
262-2470
AREA CODE 608

September 29, 1969

Dr. Elmer P. Wheeler
Manager, Environmental Health
Monsanto Company
800 North Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63166

Dear Dr. Wheeler:

In your letter of April 22, 1969, you expressed an interest in discussing research concerning chlorinated biphenyls which is being conducted by the Water Chemistry Lab. As I did not hear from you by telephone the latter part of May, as was indicated in your letter, I am writing again to inquire into the present status of Monsanto's investigation of the reports of chlorinated biphenyls in the environment.

The Water Chemistry Lab. is investigating the presence of unidentified organochlorine compounds in natural waters and fish in several areas of Wisconsin. Chromatograms of fish extracts from rivers near some industrial centers certainly resemble chromatograms of Arochlor 1262. Similar chromatograms were obtained from water analyses, although the components appear to be at very low concentrations in the water.

Since these chromatograms offer only presumptive evidence in the analysis of these complex mixtures and to avoid reporting data with no chemical confirmations, the compounds have been described in our formal reports as chlorinated organic contaminants rather than PCB's or Arochlors. Present and future work is aimed at isolation and structural identification via spectral analyses of these components. Also, environmental sampling will be designed to determine the sources of the contamination. On this point, I cannot share your difficulty in accepting the possibility that the contamination is of industrial origin.

From the chemical literature over the past 15-20 years, I would presume Monsanto has done considerable work on the Arochlor mixtures. It would be helpful if your department could provide me with all available

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results of chemical studies on the chlorinated biphenyls. I would be especially interested in the spectra and chemistry of individual isomers. I would not be interested in information such as that found in the technical bulletins.

Thank you for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to call on me to discuss the research at the Water Chemistry Lab.

Sincerely yours,

G. Fred Lee, Professor
Water Chemistry

GFL/js

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