FROM (NAME & LOCATION) Medical Department A2SA

DATE February 13, 1973

SUBJECT Diphenyl Poisoning in Fruit Paper Production

REFERENCE

TO : W. B. Papageorge
B2NK

cc R. E. Kelly, M. D. A2SA
S. Turover, Brussels
H. S. Bergen B2SL
W. R. Corey B2SL
E. V. John B1NC
J. S. Metcalf E1SF
W. R. Richard T3A
J. F. Stapleton B2SA
R. P. W. Kup, Ruabon
J. Mason, Brussels

You may recall that back in the spring of 1970, there was an exchange correspondence between representatives of the Institute of Occupational Health in Helsinki, Finland and the Brussels office. We were informed that there had been the death of one workman due to using diphenyl in a paper factory producing wrapping paper for citrus fruit. This case, and that of an additional eight men allegedly "poisoned" by excessive exposure to diphenyl are described in the attached article which appeared in the February, 1973 issue of the American Journal, Archives of Environmental Health.

In commenting on the description of the fatality as we received it in 1970, Dr. Kelly made the following comment:

> " What we have here is a post hoc, propter hoc diagnosis. The Occupational Health Institute has said that because this man worked with biphenyl and died of liver trouble, his death was caused by biphenyl. Certainly, the same thing could be said about perchlorethylene which the man used for cleaning the biphenyl vessels. Further, in the study run on the long-term inhalation of biphenyl when levels were very high, the animals developed irritation of the eyes, nose and windpipe. There has been no report of these findings in this particular worker."

After an opportunity to review the present publication, Dr. Kelly may have further comments. In any case, the reported levels of exposure were unbelievably excessive - if the sampling and analytical data are accurate.

Monsanto is mentioned unfavorably in the "Comment" on the last page of the article.

EPW

Elmer P. Wheeler

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