

#9

September 25, 1980

L. L. Little,

As Mayor of the Town of Bancroft I frequently talk with W. Stuart Calwell, the Town's Attorney. This afternoon in a conversation with him, he asked me how long I had been with Monsanto, and how long a member of supervision. It was when he began asking specific questions about 2,4,5-T, para-amino biphenyl, and Sopanax, that I became suspicious and asked him if I was being "pumped" for information that may be used against my employer. He laughed and said he was "just curious". I told him that I felt his interest somewhat beyond the bounds of normal curiosity, and I resented being put in the position of a witness, even if only in an incidental conversation.

Mr. Calwell asked specifically about the dioxin that shows up in miniscule amounts in 2,4,5-T. I told him that it is a dangerous substance, but its level could be kept in tolerable bounds with sufficient process control. The Seveso incident discharged a dioxin-rich substance apparently caused by a loss of temperature control. The unusual incidents are the ones that people remember. I also told him that there seems to me to be an element of individual susceptibility in connection to contact with this dioxin. Some people who have worked in the manufacture of 2,4,5-T are badly affected while others are not. This product was discontinued by Monsanto some time ago. I told Mr. Calwell that I was involved in the analysis of this product, and that one of the procedures in the laboratory involved concentration of the dioxin to a level where it could be detected. I seem to have suffered no ill effects from it, and while this is no proof that it is harmless, should indicate that personal awareness of hazards connected with any chemical substance goes far in preventing injury.

Regarding PAB, I did not work at the Nitro plant when it was manufactured. I do know that Monsanto ceased production immediately there was an awareness of the effects of it. People who contracted the problems caused by PAB are not forgotten. It was not known beforehand what the substance could do to a person, but once known I feel Monsanto acted responsibly.

He asked me why people who worked in Sopanax manufacture were provided with lemonade. Was it to flush the kidneys? I told him that I didn't know. The stuff caused violent sneezing. In any case, this is a product that hasn't been made at Nitro for many years.

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Mr. Calwell was told that if he wanted any information he should contact the Nitro Plant Manager's office or Monsanto Headquarters in St. Louis. He would not tell me why he was asking the questions, but it is probable that an employee or former employee has retained Mr. Calwell for some action against the Company.



Gilbert D. Bayless.
Maintenance F.L.S.

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