

Monsanto

TELEPHONE LOCATION PHONE

LAW DEPART JT

T. M. Bistline - E2 - 4-2989

DATE

April 5, 1983

cc:

SUBJECT

Annual Meeting Briefing Book

REFERENCE

TO

D. R. Bishop - F3EB

Attached please find a revised version of the response concerning Agent Orange for inclusion in the briefing book. I have underlined the single change that I suggest.

T. M. Bistline

TMB/vf

Attachment

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C14418

Q: DID MONSANTO MANUFACTURE AND SUPPLY AGENT ORANGE TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR USE IN VIETNAM?

A: Yes. Monsanto was one of several companies asked to supply this compound during the Vietnam War.

Background: Monsanto manufactured the principal ingredients of Agent Orange -- 2,4,5-T at the Nitro Plant from 1948-1969 and 2,4-D at the Krummrich Plant from 1946-1970. At various times from 1963 to 1969 Monsanto provided quantities of a mixture of 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D to the U.S. government. In 1969 and 1970, respectively, Monsanto decided for economic reasons to stop production of 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D.

The dioxin 2,3,7,8-TCDD can be formed in ultra-trace quantities during the manufacture of tri-chloro-phenol, which is used to make 2,4,5-T. The Agent Orange controversy involves this dioxin, which is extremely toxic to some laboratory animals and less toxic to others. The only proven long-term effect of dioxin exposure in humans is the skin disease chloracne.

Q: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE AGENT ORANGE LAW SUITS AND MONSANTO'S POTENTIAL LIABILITY?

A: These lawsuits have been consolidated for pretrial purposes in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Discovery and other pretrial matters are continuing. Since this is a matter in litigation, it would be inappropriate to speculate on the potential liability to Monsanto, but I will say that, in our judgment, the available scientific and medical evidence does not support the claims of adverse health effects alleged in these lawsuits.

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