Monsanto

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FROM - NAME & LOCATION: D. R. Bishop - B1ND

DEC 22 1975

DATE: Dec. 22, 1975

SUBJECT: EPA/PCB PRESS CONFERENCE

REFERENCE:

TO:

Mr. R. E. Beal - B2SB
Dr. O. P. DeGarmo - A2SA
Dr. W. C. Hammann - B3SA
Mr. E. H. Harbison - B3SA
Mr. W. B. Papageorge - B3NB
Dr. C. Paton - B2SK
[redacted]

Mr. W. R. Corey - B2SA
Mr. K. W. Easley - 1920
Mr. R. W. Flint - 1740

Mr. R. G. Potter - B2SB
Dr. G. Roush - A2SA
Mr. D. L. Sliney - B2SB
Mr. J. C. Weber - B2SK
Mr. W. W. Withers - B2SA
Mr. D. Wood - B2SD
Mr. J. J. Zeman - B2SK

Warren Easley called late this morning to relay a report on EPA's PCB Press Conference which is summarized here.

The conference was well attended by all segments of the news media.

Many of the media questions reflected strong interest in the conditions at our Krummrich Plant, i.e., 1) What do you know about the effects on plant workers and the residents of Sauget? 2) They must obviously be inhaling residues/fumes since its made in such large quantities there. Following the session, Warren overheard one network TV reporter say he'd sure like to get into that plant. Another newsman told him to call St. Louis!

Warren feels (and I tend to agree) that these media types probably think they've got another VCM or Asbestos or Kepone issue developing here.

Warren pointed out that while there were a few inaccuracies stated by EPA regarding WGK (one EPA official said we are discharging 2-3 pounds per day into the municipal treatment plant and another said it was less than 5 pounds per day) their remarks regarding WGK could not be blamed for the media interest.

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For example EPA said the quantities being found in the environment are not coming from Monsanto's plant, but from the shipments made to Monsanto's customers. They also said the problem is not the people in and around Monsanto's plant, it is the food supply -- and not only fish.

Other comments and/or questions and answers included the following:

EPA: At the levels found in our environment, there is no evidence of human effects, but based on animal tests, EPA considers PCBs to be a suspect carcinogen.

EPA: Will call for labeling transformers and capacitors (?) so that workers will know what they contain and what care should be exercised.

EPA: G.E. is currently discharging one pound per day into the Hudson River but because the land around its plant is soaked with PCBs, as much as five pounds per day enters the environment when it rains.

EPA: Wants zero discharge but if studies prove this is impossible, they would go for ounces per day.

Q: When you meet with Monsanto in January, will you push them to establish a timetable for a phaseout.

EPA: We will push users to eliminate all non-essential uses where fire protection is not necessary. Where fire safety is necessary, we will urge R&D to develop substitutes.

Q: Will you ask Monsanto to stop production?

EPA: NO - That would shut down the electrical power industry and railroads in short order. We must find a way to proceed without shuting down the country.

Q: Do you expect Monsanto to cooperate?

EPA: Based on continuing discussions with Monsanto we have no reason to believe otherwise.

EPA Comment - PCBs are 20 times more persistent than DDT. They cause tumors in animals. They are laying in the environment, in the sediment in the bottom of lakes and rivers where they are like a delayed action timebomb waiting to go off. We may have to live with them for the rest of our lives.

Surprisingly, there was no particular interest expressed in the G.E./Hudson River situation.

Based on the news media's interest in our plant workers and the residents of Sauget, it would behoove us to publish and release (or at least have ready to release) the results of our epidemological study as soon as possible.

D. R. B./mks

D. R. Bishop

/mks
attachment

P.S. Attached is a copy of the Dow Jones account of this conference.