Monsanto

FROM (NAME—LOCATION—PHONE) Mr. R. C. Isham - B1ND

DATE : September 14, 1978

cc: Mr. F. E. Ovaitt - A3ND

SUBJECT : Q's & A's for CFOL Speakers

REFERENCE :

TO : Messrs. R. A. Stohr - B2SA
D. Wood - B2SD

For your information, I have approved the attached for use by our 200+ CFOL speakers. Rather than answer PCBs questions with detailed, highly comprehensive answers, I feel these quick answers are appropriate for the intended general audiences.

R. C. Isham

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att.

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EX P-3252
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IN - 10 (REV. 8/77)

PCB-ARCH0748262

PCB (Polychlorinated biphenyl)

If handled correctly, questions about PCB need not damage the credibility of your CFOL message. After all, Monsanto's actions to curb the PCB problem have been praised as a model of corporate social responsibility. Answers should be direct, but there is no need to dwell on the subject. Do not comment on any ongoing litigation involving PCB.

Q. You have told us a lot of good news about chemicals. Why don't you tell us the bad news -- like PCB?

A. I've been discussing risks and benefits, and I think that's how we must look at PCB. The benefit of PCB was improved safety of electrical equipment. The electrical industry needed a fire-resistant insulating fluid for transformers. Otherwise, a short circuit might cause a disastrous fire and loss of life.

The risks of PCB are not so well known. The real problem is that it doesn't break down easily if it gets into the environment. But contrary to what you may see in the news media, there is no conclusive evidence that PCB is either highly toxic or carcinogenic ~~to humans~~.

All this considered, however, it seemed better to seek substitutes for PCB. As far back as 1970, Monsanto began restricting sales and advising customers how to guard against PCB escaping into the environment. In 1977, Monsanto voluntarily quit making PCB when it became apparent that other products could be substituted for PCB.

Q. What is being done about the PCB already in the environment?

A. Incineration is the best known method for destroying PCB once it is collected. But there is no known technology that will guarantee 100 percent collection of PCB from river bottoms and lake beds. Dredging, for instance, would recover some PCB but would also recirculate some that had settled. Monsanto is funding research to identify innovative and practical approaches to removing PCB from the environment.