

Manipulation udies

rt, Greenpeace said
fice of Criminal En-
1 begun preliminary
possible manipula-
key dioxin studies
Monsanto.

out the Greenpeace
A official who asked
ified said: "There is
on underway." The
ned to elaborate on
of the investigation.
ing, a spokesman for
id the company had
fied of any EPA in-
nd that it stood by the
nd and unbiased. At
e, he said Monsanto
EPA to review the
in light of the allega-

aid the allegations
udies arose from liti-
t Monsanto in which
was an active partici-
characterized the Green-
is a "rehash" of issues
rt. The studies have
y some scientists in
federal policies that
egorize dioxin as a
agent to humans.

Those critics say while laboratory
animal studies suggest high toxic-
ity, harmful effects have not been
verified in exposed humans.

Dioxin is a by-product in the
manufacture of certain pesticides
and herbicides, most notably
Agent Orange, the defoliant
widely used during the Vietnam
War. It also is generated in incin-
eration and the bleaching of wood
pulp for white paper products.

The three Monsanto studies at
issue examined health effects
among workers at the company's
herbicide plant in Nitro, WV, who
were exposed to dioxin during
routine operations from 1955 to
1977 as well as in a 1949 industrial
accident that released larger
amounts of the contaminant.

The studies, published from
1980 to 1983, are important be-
cause they represent one of the
most comprehensive assessments
of dioxin's health impact on hu-
mans.

The Monsanto studies found no
conclusive evidence of serious
health effects—such as cancer or
liver damage—due to dioxin expo-
sure. As with other studies, the
Monsanto reports suggest the only

Purple Heart



Joseph R. Hema, left, national senior vice commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), presents Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ), a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, with a commemorative copy of the MOPH's book, "Legacy of the Purple Heart."

consistent ailment among exposed
workers was chloracne, a severe
form of skin lesions.

Among other allegations, the
Greenpeace report suggested the
Monsanto studies were manipu-
lated in their

▲ Disease rates among dioxin-
exposed workers were compared
to illness in a "control" group of
workers who supposedly were not
exposed, but actually were. As a
result, the report said, differences
EPA Probing, Pg. 15

an Program

ON
standing home loans
serviced by the pro-
loans had an esti-
value of \$152 billion--
f which were guaran-
A.
n to the home loans,
ys the VA, as of 30
was holding \$1.2 bil-
lee" loans which are
issued for property
the VA through fore-
aler resold.
majority of recent
occurred in "energy"
economies were de-
use their natural re-
not in demand," an

happened in places like Houston,
Oklahoma City and Denver," he
added. "Now it looks like the prob-
lem is going to move into the
Northeast and the Midwest, where
a general recession is likely to be
felt most."

While some analysts believe
the program was never intended to
be self-sufficient, others claim the
opposite. It depends on how pro-
gram accounting is calculated, the
House Aide said.

"Basically, the VA home loan
program was never self-sufficient
because the government was issu-
ing money through transfers with
the revolving fund," he said.

A spokesman for the Veterans
of Foreign Wars (VFW) in Wash-
ington, DC, said the program actu-

he said.

But now, the program is plum-
meting into the red. The present
crisis, the VFW spokesman said,
can be blamed on two factors: the
souring economy and the Reagan
administration-mandated VA di-
vestment from its home loan por-
tfolio in the early 1980s.

"Without a strong portfolio, the
program became unfit for the diffi-
cult financial times which were on
the way," he said.

A spokesman for the American
Legion concurred.

"The VA home loan program

was sacked by the Reagan admini-
stration, and the fact that it will be
incurring further losses really
comes as no surprise to us."

This notwithstanding, the GAO
report indicated that foreclosures
actually dropped from 49,000 in
Fiscal Year (FY) 1988 to 43,000 in
FY 1989.

"This was the first year the VA
experienced a lessening of home
loan foreclosures since 1980," the
report said.

Some legislative changes were
made in the last session of the
See GAO, Pg. 15

INSIDE

Desert
Shield Cost

Page 3

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11047

percent fee from everyone, under new law veterans will be required to pay from zero to 1.875 percent of the home's down payment to receive a loan. This, according to the House Subcommittee staffer, is expected to reduce the number of loan defaults and subsequently reduce foreclosures in the long run.

The law also created "The

ultimately make the older Loan Guarantee Fund still more reliant on congressional appropriations since new loan origination fees will be deposited in the new fund. "While the future losses don't count against us," the House Appropriations aide said, "it means less money will be available for the VA--and the government generally--in the future."★

EPA Probing

From 1

in disease rates between the two groups were muted.

▲ Dioxin-exposed workers were arbitrarily placed into different groups that were studied separately. The groups were so small in number that it became virtually impossible to detect statistically significant increases in disease among exposed workers compared to the unexposed.

▲ Some cases of cancer and heart disease among dioxin-exposed workers inexplicably were excluded from some studies.

Greenpeace said its report, entitled "Science for Sale," was based on independent analysis of the Monsanto studies, internal Monsanto memos and the sworn testimony of Monsanto employees and consultants.

EPA officials said that, as with other chemicals, the agency largely developed its dioxin policies on the basis of laboratory animal studies in which relatively low doses of dioxin caused cancer, birth defects and liver, kidney and nerve damage.

Those health effects have not been observed in studies of Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange nor in forestry workers with long-term occupational exposure to Agent Orange nor in forestry workers with long-term occupational exposure to dioxin-contaminated herbicides.

The EPA has acknowledged the uncertainty about dioxin's impact on human health, but the agency has decided to err on the side of caution and has pushed the paper industry and others to reduce dioxin contamination.★

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landing near her home south of O'Fallon. The home was destroyed by strong winds Tuesday afternoon. Usery and Jene, were not home at the time of the storm. But their parakeet, "Toto," was home, and it survived.

L.T. Spence/Post-Dispatch

urquette State Park

killed in a weather-

ident in Chicago.
were injured in the
with four remaining
One is John Frer-

with friends in a field north of O'Fallon when he was apparently picked up by a strong wind in Tuesday's storm and slammed against trees. He remained in critical condition with head injuries at St. John's Mercy Medical Center late Wednesday.

Only three people suffered minor

injuries in Columbia.

In Illinois, a man from Chicago who died trying to drive through 12-foot-deep water in a closed viaduct Wednesday was the only person killed in a series of storms that battered the state.

■ **DATAPAGE WORKERS** were ready for a disaster, executives say..... Page 15A
■ **COLD SNAP** did little damage to plants in the area, horticulturists say..... Page 15A

See STORM, Page 15



David Sterling

er III (right), president of Bel-Aire Insurance Co.; and son leaving the courthouse in Jefferson City as state is seeking receivership of the firm.

President Arthur
representative from
and the chairman
Finance Committee,
12 in federal court
its of drug dealing.
Jones that he was
wmyer insurance
and last year.
has come up fre-
sy. Bel-Aire funds
ad owned by Thig-

pen in Arizona and Louisiana.

Also disclosed Wednesday:

■ Blumeyer signed a letter that offered to post \$30,000 of Bel-Aire's funds as a personal recognizance bond for Thigpen in U.S. District Court in Cheyenne, Wyo.

Thigpen pleaded guilty Sept. 13 to charges of violating federal law in the process of bribing the Wyoming insurance commissioner.

■ Seven employees were rejoin-

See BEL-AIRE, Page 10

Britain's New Premier Names Rivals To Cabinet

Compiled From News Services

LONDON — Prime Minister John Major welcomed his defeated rivals into his Cabinet on Wednesday and called for a nation in which all may prosper according to "their talent, their application and their good fortune."

"I don't promise you that it will be easy, and I don't promise you that it will be quick," Major said outside 10 Downing St. after being confirmed as prime minister by Queen Elizabeth II. "If you forgive me," he added, "I

will go into No. 10 straight away and make a start right now."

Major, at 47 the youngest prime minister of the century, had displayed both talent and tenacity in overcoming childhood poverty and rising rapidly through the government.

It was his fortune to be the popular choice of a party torn by rebellion against his patron, Margaret Thatcher.

Hours after saying farewell to her, Major announced a new Cabinet line-

See MAJOR, Page 12

Greenpeace, Chemist Challenge Monsanto On Dioxin Findings

By William H. Frelvogel

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Greenpeace and a whistle-blower at the Environmental Protection Agency are accusing Monsanto Co. of fraudulently understating the health risks of dioxin.

Both the international environmental organization and the EPA chemist called upon the agency to conduct an independent evaluation of what they say are flawed Monsanto studies indicating that dioxin has little health effect on humans.

The EPA chemist, Cate Jenkins, also urged a criminal investigation of the firm, alleging that it covered up evidence of dioxin's ill effects.

A Monsanto spokesman said Wednesday that there appeared to be a criminal inquiry under way and so declined to comment on Jenkins' charges.

But the company said that Greenpeace's allegations were untrue and that the firm stood by the studies. He noted that Monsanto sent a letter to

See DIOXIN, Page 10